

# **PUNJAB HISTORY CONFERENCE**

**EIGHTEENTH SESSION**

**December 2-4, 1983**

## **PROCEEDINGS**



**PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT,  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA.**





### *Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-library*

Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-library has been created with the approval and personal blessings of Sri Satguru Uday Singh Ji. You can easily access the wealth of teaching, learning and research materials on Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-library online, which until now have only been available to a handful of scholars and researchers.

This new Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-library allows school children, students, researchers and armchair scholars anywhere in the world at any time to study and learn from the original documents.

As well as opening access to our historical pieces of world heritage, digitisation ensures the long-term protection and conservation of these fragile treasures. This is a significant milestone in the development of the Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-Library, but it is just a first step on a long road.

Please join with us in this remarkable transformation of the Library. You can share your books, magazines, pamphlets, photos, music, videos etc. This will ensure they are preserved for generations to come. Each item will be fully acknowledged.

#### **To continue this work, we need your help**

Your generous contribution and help will ensure that an ever-growing number of the Library's collections are conserved and digitised, and are made available to students, scholars, and readers the world over. The Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji E-Library collection is growing day by day and some rare and priceless books/magazines/manuscripts and other items have already been digitised.

We would like to thank all the contributors who have kindly provided items from their collections. This is appreciated by us now and many readers in the future.

#### **Contact Details**

For further information - please contact

Email: [NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com](mailto:NamdhariElibrary@gmail.com)

karpal.singh.chana



# **PUNJAB HISTORY CONFERENCE**

**EIGHTEENTH SESSION**

**December 2-4, 1983**

**P R O C E E D I N G S**



**PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT,  
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA.**



©

REGISTRAR

PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

### Editorial Board

Editor

DR GURBACHAN SINGH NAYYAR

### Members of Editorial Board

Dr Kirpal Singh, Dr A. C. Arora, S. Parm Bakhshish Singh, S. Ajit Singh,  
S. Balbir Singh, S. Sukhdial Singh, S. Kirpal Singh, Shri R. K. Ghai

The publication of the work was financially  
supported by the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi  
and

The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed or conclusions  
reached, is entirely that of the author and the Indian Council of  
Historical Research or the Editor accepts no responsibility for them.

HC 452402

March, 1985

Published and Printed by :

The Registrar, Punjabi University, Patiala  
at Phulkian Press, Patiala.



## CONTENTS

1. Preface	vii
<i>Dr G.S. Nayyar</i>	
2. Welcome Address	1
<i>Dr S.S. Johl</i>	
3. Inaugural Address	3
<i>Dr Ganda Singh</i>	
4. Presidential Address	5
<i>Dr Hari Ram Gupta</i>	
5. Presidential Address (ANCIENT SECTION)	13
<i>Dr S.N. Chopra</i>	
6. Vedic Sites of Northern India	24
<i>O.P. Bharadwaj</i>	
7. Religious Beliefs and Practices in Pratimanatakam	33
<i>K.K. Shah</i>	
8. Naga Worship in Ancient Punjab	36
<i>Sukhninder Kaur Dhillon</i>	
9. The Stupa of Sanghol	41
<i>K.K. Rishi</i>	
10. An Ancient Trade Centre—Prithudaka	42
<i>Ashvini Agrawal</i>	
11. An Interesting Clay Sealing from Sunet	45
<i>Devendra Handa</i>	
12. Sunet—An Ancient Metropolis of Punjab	48
<i>G.B. Sharma and Kuldip Singh.</i>	
13. Presidential Address (MEDIEVAL SECTION)	57
<i>S.B.P. Nigam</i>	
14. Guru Nanak's Approach to Religion	65
<i>Gurbachan Singh Nayyar</i>	
15. Punjab Peasantry during Akbar's Reign	71
<i>Pritpal Singh Bedi</i>	
16. Art and Architecture of the Golden Temple	72
<i>Madanjit Kaur</i>	



17.	Tradition of Miri and Piri in Sikhism <i>Manjit Kaur</i>	80
18.	Social and Economic Data of Kashmir in the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri <i>Hem Raj</i>	81
19.	Significance of Guru Gobind Singh's Zafarnama <i>Harpreet Kaur</i>	86
20.	Gurmatta <i>Sukhdial Singh</i>	89
21.	Education During the Sikh Rule <i>Surinder Kaur</i>	90
22.	Foreigners at the Sikh Court <i>Devinder Kumar Verma</i>	99
23.	Trade and Commerce as Factors Influencing the Relations between the British Indian Government and Lahore Durbar (1830—1838) <i>M.L. Ahluwalia</i>	103
24.	Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Alum-i-Mufida-i-Punjab : 1877-87 <i>Nazar Singh</i>	116
25.	Origin and Growth of Sikh Architecture <i>D.S. Dhillon</i>	128
26.	Kangra School of Art and the Sikh Paintings <i>D.S. Dhillon</i>	129
27.	Folk Historians of the Punjab : A Study of Marasis and Bhattis in Socio-Cultural Background <i>Parm Bakhshish Singh Sidhu</i>	133
28.	Status of Women in the Pre-Modern Punjab <i>Satish K. Bajaj</i>	137
29.	Relationship between the Sirmur Chieftainship and the Mughal State based on the Sirmur Family Mughal Documents (second half of 17th and 18th centuries) <i>B.R. Grover</i>	143
30.	Presidential Address (MODERN SECTION) <i>Dr Pardaman Singh</i>	152
31.	Urban Growth and Urbanization in the Punjab (1849-1947) <i>Sukhwant Singh</i>	160
32.	Causation of Urbanization during the British Period in Punjab—A case study of Jalandhar <i>S.D. Pradhan</i>	168
33.	Secular Traditions of Patiala <i>A.C. Arora</i>	171



34.	Economic Exploitation of the Native States—A Case Study of the Kapurthala State <i>R.N. Vohra</i>	178
35.	Office of Wazir in a Princely State, Jubbal of Simla Hills During the Nineteenth Century <i>M.S. Rathaur</i>	183
36.	The Judicial and Police Administration of Hoshiarpur District under the British (1846—1947) <i>Narinder Jit Kaur</i>	191
37.	Phulkian Chiefs and the Revolt of 1857 <i>Hari Singh Boparai</i>	195
38.	Land Revenue System in Kalsia State <i>B.S. Grewal</i>	200
39.	Muslims During the 19th Century Punjab <i>R.K. Ghai</i>	207
40.	Forgery in Amritsar Butcher Murder Case 1871 <i>Swaran Singh Sanehi</i>	212
41.	Development of Education in Jind State (1887-1898) <i>Ajit Singh</i>	218
42.	Managing Committee of Khalsa College Amritsar : Its Relations with British Government <i>Kashmir Singh</i>	221
43.	Factors Leading to the Split of Arya Samaj in 1893 <i>M.L. Thakur</i>	225
44.	The Punjab Muslims : A Socio-Economic Study (1901-1920) <i>Jagtar Singh Rakkar</i>	232
45.	British Policy Regarding Transit Duty on Charas in the Phulkian States (1905-1937) <i>Harcharan Singh</i>	240
46.	Character of the Leadership of the Central Sikh League (1919-1928)	246
47.	Rural Punjab and the Congress (1920-1942) <i>S.D. Gajrani</i>	257
48.	The Akalis and the Abdication of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha <i>Gursharan Singh</i>	270
49.	Lahore Congress Session 1929 : A Land Mark in the History of Freedom Struggle <i>S.D. Gajrani</i>	276



50.	<b>Praja Mandal Movement in Punjab</b> <i>Kiran Passey</i>	280
51.	<b>Genesis of Praja Mandal Movement in Patiala State</b> <i>J.S. Rekhi</i>	285
52.	<b>Giani Zail Singh's Role in the Praja Mandal Movement in Faridkot State</b> <i>Kulbir Singh Dhillon</i>	290
53.	<b>Sikandar Jinnah Pact : A Brief Study in Punjab Politics and Freedom Struggle (1937-1944)</b> <i>Y.P. Bajaj</i>	295
54.	<b>Giani Pritam Singh and the Indian National Army</b> <i>Balbir Singh</i>	303
55.	<b>Upsurge in the Tenant Agitation in Patiala State (1937-1939)</b> <i>Mohinder Singh</i>	307
56.	<b>Police Firing in Dhami State (July 16, 1939) : An Important Event in the Simla Hill States</b> <i>C.L. Datta</i>	315
57.	<b>The Tenant Movement in Pepsu (1948-1955)</b> <i>Karanbir Singh Mann</i>	320
58.	<b>Preservation of Historical Records</b> <i>Naginder Singh</i>	328
59.	<b>ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਰਾਏ ਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ</b>	331
60.	<b>ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਤਾ ਨਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਗੀ</b>	335
61.	<b>'ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ' ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੇ ਰਚਨ-ਕਾਲ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ</b>	336
	<b>List of delegates</b>	342

## Preface

The theme of the eighteenth session of the Punjab History Conference was 'Urbanization in the Punjab with special reference to trade and commerce', a hitherto more or less neglected but a significant subject. Some scholars read their research papers on the main theme. Nevertheless, they contributed papers on a wide variety of subjects bearing upon political, social, religious and cultural aspects of ancient, medieval and modern periods of the history of the Punjab. The large variety of papers presented and discussed in this session obviously opened new vistas of knowledge and helped filling many yawning gaps.

This is also a matter of great satisfaction that the Department of Punjab Historical Studies has always been taking particular care to publish the proceedings of each session speedily, thereby giving no chance to the delegates of the next session to suffer any disappointment on this account. The present volume which is being released today contains the proceedings of the eighteenth session held in December, 1983. The readers will, perhaps share our deep concern over the fact that most of the scholars do not send their research papers thoroughly scrutinized, thereby resulting in incorrect quotations, incomplete foot notes and typing errors which cause delay and mistakes in printing. We shall consider it our proud privilege if scholars attracted to this forum of historical research divert their attention to this fact to enable us to place the labour of their researches properly without error before the elite gathering here and fulfil the avowed object of intensifying research to present a complete and coherent account of the past.

Apart from the general president's address and three addresses of the sectional presidents, research papers presented in the Conference have been arranged sectionwise and an attempt has been made to keep them in chronological order, albeit this order has to be disturbed in the case of final drafts of the papers having received late.

It is remarkable to note how during the course of these nineteen years, the Punjab History Conference has assumed a significant place in the academic life of the University and of the entire region. It is



not only from the point of view of the participating delegates taking keen interest in deliberations of the Conference but also from that of the quality of the papers presented. To see a large number of distinguished scholars from neighbouring and distant places, taking part in its deliberations for promoting historical research not only of the Punjab but also of the Indian history, is very encouraging.

I am grateful to the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi for sanctioning grants both for holding the Conference and also for the publication of its proceedings.

In the end, I must place on record my deep sense of gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, Dr S. S. Johl for his inspiring and dynamic leadership throughout. The editing of this volume was an hard enough job which, but for the whole-hearted co-operation of my colleagues in the Editorial Board, would not have been so easy an accomplishment. My thanks are due to them. I am grateful to S. P. B. S. Sidhu, S. Ajit Singh, S. Kirpal Singh and Mr. R. K. Ghai who heroically shared with me the responsibility of preparing the press copy and seeing it through. Acknowledgement must also be made to the authors whose contributions comprise this volume. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank Dr A. C. Arora, Professor in the History Department, for extending his co-operation in persuading his students to present papers in the Conference which have been duly printed. Last but not the least, I am indebted to the staff of the Phulkian Press for doing the job so nicely.

Punjabi University,  
Patiala.  
March, 1985.

GURBACHAN SINGH NAYYAR

# PUNJAB HISTORY CONFERENCE—XVIII SESSION

2-4, December, 1983







## Welcome Address

Dr S. S. Johl\*

Mr President, Dr Ganda Singh, sectional presidents, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen :

I consider it a proud privilege to extend to you all a very warm welcome this morning to the eighteenth session of the Punjab History Conference. This session has the distinction of being presided over by an eminent historian of the Punjab, Dr Hari Ram Gupta. He had the singular distinction of being the first person to receive the degree of Ph.D. in History from the Panjab University, Lahore, in 1937 and again the first person to obtain the degree of D. Litt. as early as 1944. An erudite historian with monumental work on the eighteenth century Punjab, Dr Gupta is the author of over a dozen standard research books on Punjab History. Of these, mention may be made here of four volumes of *History of the Sikhs*, *Indo-Pakistan War* (1965), *Life and Works of Mohan Lal Kashmiri* and *Later Mughal History of the Punjab*. The Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, conferred upon him in 1949 the Sir Jadunath Sarkar Gold Medal for his "outstanding original contribution to the history of Punjab."

No less fortunate is the association of Dr Ganda Singh with this session of the conference. Dr Ganda Singh hardly needs an introduction. He was the first Director of the Department of Punjab Historical Studies and it was due to his keen initiative and interest, as you know all, that the Punjab History Conference was founded in 1965. He has devoted his entire life to the cause of studies in and researches of Punjab History. Apart from being author of a large number of original works on the Punjab History, he has been editing and publishing most regularly and unfailingly the biannual journal, *The Panjab Past and Present* for the last sixteen years. We are thankful to him for accepting our invitation to inaugurate this eighteenth session of the conference.

I also accord a hearty welcome to the sectional presidents—Dr S.N.

---

\*Vice-Chancellor, Punjabi University, Patiala.



Chopra, Chairman, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Dr S.B.P. Nigam, Chairman, Department of History, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra and Dr Pardaman Singh, Head, Department of History, M. D. University, Rohtak. They are well known scholars in their respective fields and shall be presiding over the ancient, medieval and modern sections respectively of the conference.

I should take this opportunity to welcome all the delegates including some foreign delegates and scholars who have taken the trouble to be present in this session of the conference.

It gives me an immense pleasure to note that the special theme of this conference is 'Urbanization in Punjab with special reference to trade and commerce.' During the past years, the Punjab History Conference has rightly focused the attention of the scholars on various problems and aspects of the history of the Punjab and some of the significant issues have been raised. The organisers of the conference have done well to concentrate the attention of the scholars of history on urbanization of the Punjab—a subject which has been more or less neglected hitherto. The task of constructing historical accounts of the cities of the Punjab can afford to provide a fascinating study. Scholars can delve deep into the various sources available for the purpose. The case-study of the individual towns in the context of trend of the public towards shifting to cities should help in the reconstruction of historical account on scientific lines. I shall, of course, refrain from singling out specific issues pertaining to the urbanization for the simple reason that I do not intend encroaching upon the domains of the scholars present here. But it is obvious that trade, commerce and industrialisation would inevitably figure in these studies on urbanization.

It would be of interest to the Punjab historians that several towns in the south-western districts of the Punjab, such as Muktsar and Faridkot, are suffering from acute problem of rising water-table. These towns are virtually sinking. Originally, these were desert areas and the settlement of population mostly took place around depressions where water accumulated. As a result of population-concentrations, these towns have gradually developed to the status of cities today and they now happen to be located in sort of bowls where ground water-level problems have become acuter than the adjoining areas. Such aspects, I am sure, would also find place in the deliberations of this conference.

Once again I accord a warm welcome to you all for participating in these deliberations. I wish all the success to the conference.

## Inaugural Address

Dr Ganda Singh\*

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen :

I deem it a privilege to have been asked to inaugurate the eighteenth session of the Punjab History Conference. It is a matter of immense pleasure for me to see my cherished dream fulfilled. The idea of founding this conference had been suggested by me in 1965 with the object of promoting the study and research in the history of the Punjab. The suggestion evoked a favourable response from Sardar Kirpal Singh Narang, the then Vice-Chancellor of the University, who himself belonged to the discipline of history. Since its inception, this objective has been keenly pursued by this conference.

A glance at the various proceedings of the conference shows that every session of this conference has marked an advance over the previous one from the point of view of variety and quality of papers presented. The credit of the remarkable success, achieved in this direction, goes mainly to the delegates who have taken keen interest in making the conference a popular forum. They have been eagerly looking forward to attend its annual sessions and present their research papers.

This conference, as you all know, is organized under the auspices of the Department of Punjab Historical Studies of this University. Ever since its inception in 1963, this Department has made consistent endeavours for the promotion of studies in the history of the Punjab and its achievements have been very impressive. The work of editing the *Zafarnamah-i-Ranjit Singh*, launched by Dr Kirpal Singh, has been completed. This has been done in pursuance of the departmental project of publishing historical source-materials in Punjabi by translating Persian and Urdu works of historical importance. The *Mehma Prakash (Vartik)* is in the process of being edited. When published, it will be of great help to scholars working on the Guru period. The department has collected

---

\*The Lower Mall, Patiala.



a good number of original documents pertaining to Maharaja Sher Singh. These are now in the press and will soon come out in the form of two volumes.

The Department of Punjab Historical Studies instituted 'Sita Ram Kohli Memorial Lectures' in 1964 which are delivered every year by eminent historians of the country. The biannual journal, *The Panjab Past and Present* is another feature of the department. It has published some special volumes. Of those, mention may be made here of Guru Nanak Quincentenary, Bhai Vir Singh, Singh Sabha, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Bhai Jodh Singh numbers. A similar volume in commemoration of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia is in the press.

It is heartening to note that good work is being done here on various aspects of research in the history of the Punjab. Let us hope that it will successfully continue its work in future under the guidance of Dr Kirpal Singh, the present head of the department.

It is my sincere hope that valuable papers will be presented on the subject of 'Urbanization in Punjab' which is the theme of this session of the conference. This is a very significant subject which historians cannot afford to neglect. With these words, I have great pleasure in inaugurating this eighteenth session of the Punjab History Conference. I am sure that under the brilliant guidance of Dr Hari Ram Gupta and sectional presidents, the deliberations of the conference will be a great success.

## Presidential Address

Dr Hari Ram Gupta\*

Mr Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kirpal Singh, sectional presidents, delegates, ladies and gentlemen :

I must express my deep sense of gratitude to you, Mr Vice-Chancellor and Professor Kirpal Singh, for inviting me to preside over the eighteenth session of the Punjab History Conference.

In the history of India, the Punjab has always occupied a unique position. It is believed that the earliest man the world has known, lived in the land of five rivers. The famous scientist, Dr Guy E. Pilgrim examined certain teeth and part of a jaw discovered in the Lower Siwalik Hills. He concludes that fifteen million years ago the early man lived in the Chandigarh region.<sup>1</sup> Dr S.A.Q. Husaini puts the age of this early man in this region at thirty million years.<sup>2</sup> The Russian scientist, Vanilov, after making experiments on thousands of varieties of wheat, holds that bread-wheat originated in the Punjab.

It was here that the earliest civilisation in the world developed and flourished. Many Indian scholars, particularly Professor Abinash Chandra Das<sup>3</sup> and Dr Radhakumud Mookerji<sup>4</sup> are of the view that the Indian Punjab was the original home of the Aryans, and that the Iranians, Greeks, Romans, Germans and the English are their descendants. Even now a days, Punjabis are found all over the world as settlers and not as ramblers. Abinash Chandra Das says that the ancestors of modern European races came to Europe from the Punjab about 10,000 or 12,000 years ago.

The Punjab had made many lasting contributions to world's

---

\*Formerly Professor and Head, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

1. 'New Siwalik Primates and their Bearing on the Question of the Evolution of Man and the Anthropoid', *Records of the Geological Survey of India*, 1915, Vol: XIV, pp. 2-61.
2. *The Economic History of India*, Vol. I, p. ix.
3. *Rigvedic Culture*, 19, 182; K. M. Munshi, *The Glory that was Gurjaradesa*, Part I, Section II.
4. *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, his Presidential Address, Gwalior Session.



civilisation and culture. The Indus Valley Civilisation gave to the world its earliest cities, its first urban culture, its first town-planning, its first architecture in stone and brick, its first sanitary engineering and drainage works, its first community projects in the form of public baths and dancing halls, and its earliest pottery. The invention of wheel, on which almost the entire fabric of modern civilisation is based, the device of cart and harnessing animals to serve man's needs are also due to it. The quality of copper used by the Indus Valley people is described by Sir John Evans as "not yet recorded in the world." They provided wheat which has largely become the mainstay of human life.

The Hindu belief in the sanctity of the cow went from here to Greece and Rome. Joseph Davey Cunningham remarks, "It is curious that the Greeks and Romans believed the life of the ox to have been held sacred during the golden age; and Cicero quotes Aratus, to show that it was only during the *iron age* the flesh of cattle began to be eaten."<sup>5</sup>

For the first time in world history the idea of democracy was conceived in the Punjab. Her genius for political organisation expressed itself in the self-governing village. The Gramini or the village headman is mentioned in a hymn of the *Rigveda*,<sup>6</sup> the work of ancient sages of the Punjab. Zimmer says that Gramini presided over the village assembly which was constituted by the villagers themselves to solve the various village problems. He voted in the election of a king.<sup>7</sup> The advisory body of the king was selected from all castes. The Vaishyas who enjoyed reputation for sobriety, seriousness, coolness and wisdom were given preponderant representation. Dr R.C. Majumdar writes, "Thus 4 Brahmans, 8 Kshatriyas, 21 Vaishyas, 3 Sudras and 1 Suta, formed the Privy Council. Out of this body of 37, the king selected eight ministers for the transaction of ordinary business."<sup>8</sup>

Unity of thought, mind and action was aimed at throughout the proceedings. Immediately before the session of the samiti began, the priest held the sacrificial prayers saying :

"Assembly speak together : let your minds be all of one accord."<sup>9</sup>

The Vedic idea of democratic institutions led to the foundation

5. *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 41, f.n.

6. *Rigveda*, X, 62, 11; 107, 5.

7. Majumdar, R.C., *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 133.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

9. 'Rigveda,' X, 191, Griffith's translation, in R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 124.



of republics later on. In Panini's time in sixth century B. C. there were ten republics in the Punjab. Out of these six were situated in the hilly area about Jammu and Kangra. Some of these had only lower houses while others had both. At the time of Alexander's invasion in the 4th century B.C. Ambashthas occupied hilly areas of Kangra. Their military strength consisted of 60,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry and 500 chariots. In parts of Kangra, Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur districts, there were wealthy Audumbaras. Their capital was at Pathankot. The Saubhutis lived in the lower parts of Gurdaspur district round about Batala and modern Amritsar. In contracting marriage they considered neither birth nor wealth, beauty being the only criterion. The most handsome man was chosen as the republican leader. While on a visit to Alexander, the Saubhuti chief wore a crown studded with diamonds, two rubies in his ears, a long cloak up to ankles embroidered in gold and wooden slippers set with rubies and pearls.

In parts of Amritsar and Lahore districts, there were Kathaians or Kathas. Personal beauty and charm were the only criterion for marriage. Malavas had their capital at Kot Kamalia. Curtius estimates their army at 100,000. Alexander was severely wounded in fighting them. Their confederates on the Ravi were Kshudrakas. On the defeat of Malavas, a joint deputation of both the republics waited upon Alexander. They were 100 men, all handsome and very tall. Their robes were of linen wrought in gold. Alexander gave them a banquet. They were seated on golden couches separate from one another, with tapestry curtains glittering with gold hanging on all sides. Wine flowed freely, while singers and dancers gave entertainments. The Malavas later on shifted *en bloc* from across the Ravi to cis-Sutlej region, and gave it their name (Malwa). Trigartas lived in Jalandhar, Arjunāyanas near Patiala and Kunindas about Ambala.

These republics did not depend upon religion for strength. The world famous Sanskrit Grammarian, Panini, wrote in sixth century B.C., "*Shastra Up Jiwi Sangha*" (Sangha lives by the strength of arms). The Punjab republics resembled the democratic socialist republics of the present day. Religion in no way dominated the affairs of these republics.

Some of the outstanding personalities of the Punjab have made lasting contribution to religion, politics and culture. Kaikai, a Madra princess of Sialkot, provided us the oldest epic in the world, the *Ramayana* which teaches us how to deal with an external foe. The origin of Lahore and Kasur is traced to Lav and Kush, the sons of Rama, hero of the *Ramayana*, the great man and giver of ideal state (Ram Rajya). The original issue of the *District Gazetteer of Karnal*

states that the sage Balmiki, the author of *Ramayana*, belonged to Karnal district.

Gandhari, a princess of Taxila-Peshawar region, gifted us another glorious epic, the *Mahabharata*, which tells how to combat an internal enemy. The world famous sermon, the song celestial, suitable for all times and climes, the *Gita* was delivered on our holy land.

Panini, the greatest Sanskrit Grammarian, was born in the sixth century B.C., in Gandhara on the banks of river Indus. Porus, the ruler of a petty kingdom of Jehlum, boldly challenged Alexander, the greatest general of ancient world and conqueror of West Asia and Central Asia, and thereby won the conqueror's admiration and confidence. Chanakya, the earliest writer on political statecraft belonged to Taxila.

Chanakya's pupil, Chandragupta Maurya, a prince of the Koh-i-Mor region, north of Peshawar was the first ruler to unite the whole of India. He defeated Seleukos,\* successor of Alexander, the Great, in the east, on the eastern bank of the Indus, and compelled him to cede three provinces of his kingdom—Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Mekran. Thus Chandragupta extended the boundaries of India from Assam to the Indo-Caucasus mountains called Hindukush by Muslim and European writers to belittle us. The government of Afghanistan designated it as Hindukoh in 1952. Chandragupta also compelled Seleukos to marry his daughter to the victor. To ensure good treatment to his daughter, probably at the insistence of his wife, Seleukos left his trusted general, Megasthenes, at the head of a Greek contingent, as his ambassador at Chandragupta's court. Perhaps this Greek princess was the real grand-mother of Asoka, the Great.

According to Ray Choudhry, Sri Gupta, the founder of the Gupta dynasty, hailed from Sialkot. Harsha Vardhana, the last great Hindu emperor, was born and brought up at Thanesar.

The eight goddesses, Durga and her seven sisters, who rode on tigers and smote their enemies, lived in the Siwalik Hills. They are Vaishnu Devi of Trikota, Rajeshwari Devi of Kangra, Jawalamukhi, Devi (the Durga), Chhinmastika Devi of Chintpurni in Hoshiarpur district, Naina Devi in north of Anandpur, Mansa Devi of Manimajra, Chandi Devi of Chandi Mandar and Devi of Talokpur in Ambala district below Morni Hills.

In the medieval times the Sikh Gurus provided leadership to the down-trodden people of the Punjab both in religious and political fields. Guru Nanak condemned Lodi Sultans for maladministration and Babar for his tyranny committed on the inhabitants of Sayyidpur.

---

\*Seleucus Nicator.



By treating Hindus and Muslims alike, Guru Nanak laid the foundation of secularism.

It was reported to Emperor Shah Jahan that the Punjab Hindus, mostly Jats, married Muslim girls. The Emperor stopped such marriages and Muslim women already married were seized from their husbands who were fined and in some cases they were executed. As many as 4,500 such women were recovered. For instance, a Muslim girl, Zinab had been given the name of Ganga, and was taken as wife by Dalpat, a Hindu of Sirhind. The woman along with her seven children, one son and six daughters, was taken away and the man was executed.<sup>10</sup> It was due to the fanaticism of Shah Jahan and the high-handedness of his officials that Guru Har Gobind had to fight half a dozen actions against the Mughal troops of Lahore.

Guru Gobind Singh's work can be summed up in the following verses :

ਬੀ ਉਮਰ ਬੱਤੀਸ ਸਾਲਾ ਔਰ ਜਵਾਨੀ ਬੀ ਭਰੀ  
ਦਿਲ ਮੇਂ ਜਨਤਾ, ਮਨ ਮੇਂ ਚਿੰਤਾ, ਬਾਤ ਸੱਚੀ ਔਰ ਖਰੀ ।  
ਅਬ ਬਨਾਉਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੋ ਸਰ ਹਥੇਲੀ ਪਰ ਧਰੇ,  
ਧਰਮ ਕੀ ਰਕਸ਼ਾ ਕਰੇ, ਔਰ ਦੇਸ਼ ਕੀ ਖਾਤਰ ਲੜੇ ।  
ਲੁੰਬੜੀ ਸੇ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਬਣਨਾ ਹੈ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਸਾਨ ਕਾਮ,  
ਮਗਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸ਼ੇਰੋਂ ਸੇ ਬੜ੍ਹ ਪਾਇਗਾ ਨਾਮ ।

An ash-smearing and *langota*-wearing naked disciple of Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Bahadur, belonged to Paonta region. He was leading a care-free life in Maharashtra where Aurangzeb had been carrying fire and sword everywhere. A mere touch of Guru Gobind Singh's personality changed him from a *sadhu* to a general. He successfully fought against the Mughal governor of Sarhind and later on against Emperor Bahadur Shah at Lohgarh. In the first battle, he killed the governor and seized his province. In the campaign of Lohgarh, the Mughals met with a disaster. Munim Khan, the Prime Minister of the Mughal Empire, was shocked to death, while the Emperor developed insanity and died a year later. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, born at Gujranwala, made the most successful experiment in secularism. Hari Singh Nalwa, also a resident of Gujranwala, showed how fanaticism should be successfully resisted.

The Punjab and its people received a derogatory treatment from their brethren of the south-east. In Karan Parv of the *Mahabharata*, it is stated that the people of Madra and Gandhara were not

10. Lahori, Abdul Hamid, *Badshah Nama*, Vol. II, pp. 57-58; Muhammad Salih, *Amal-e-Salih*, Vol. II, 64; Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, Vol. I, p. 510.



religious-minded and practised bad manners. "In their houses people laugh and dance, . . . drinking wine eating also *saktu* and fish. From the Madra country and in Gandhara purity has disappeared."<sup>11</sup> The country beyond Gandhara was called Apgunstan, land devoid of talent. It is now called Afghanistan.

In Chapter 44, this contempt is further intensified. "One should not go to the Vahika in which the five rivers and the sixth Indus flow as it is unpurified by the Himalayas, by the Ganga, by the Yamuna and by the Saraswati, and as it is void of true religion and cleanliness. The eaters of . . . garlic and the drinkers of liquor prepared from rice jaggery are indeed void of good breeding. That country is called Aratta and is void of religion; one should not go there; it is the country of those who are Vratya (without religious ceremonies and without the sacrifices). If you drink water in Yugandhara town or stay in Achyutasthala or bathe in the pond of Bhutalavya, how will you go to heaven? An Arya should not reside for two days in the Aratta Vahika country where a Brahmin becomes a Kshatriya and then a Vaishya and then a Sudra and finally a barber and a Brahmin again."<sup>12</sup>

Even great Hindu scholars though born and brought up in the Punjab, tried to hide their identity. Panini in his grammar does not mention the Punjab though in his examples he refers to other parts of India. Chanakya describes countries as far south as Kerala but he is silent about the Punjab. Vatsyayana in his *Kamasutra* discusses customs and practices of many states of India but ignores the Punjab. Kalidas's *Meghadut*, the cloud messenger, flies from Ramgiri in the south to the Himalayas but he did not venture to enter the Punjab.

As a result of the neglect of the north-west frontier and its passes by the government and the people of Aryavarta, a regular stream of invaders flowed into India unchecked and unopposed. The people of the Punjab bore the brunt of all the foreign invasions from the north-west single-handed. They fought most ferociously for every inch of their homeland. Darius of Iran in the 5th century B. C. could not advance beyond river Ravi. Alexander, the Great, had subdued Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Sistan, Turkistan and Afghanistan in nineteen months. It took him another nineteen months to subdue the Punjab up to the Beas and back to the sea. It was not a united Punjab that opposed Alexander. The Punjab was then divided into three kingdoms and about a dozen republics and each fought individually.

11. Chapter 43 of Karan Parv.

12. Quoted by C. V. Vaidya, *History of Medieval Hindu India*, Vol. III, p. 131.

The stubborn resistance offered by the Punjabis to the Muslim invaders in their onward march towards Delhi exhausted their religious zeal and left them only with political ambition. The strongly rushing and rolling current of Islam was reduced to ripples only by the time the invaders reached the Yamuna, and it dried up in the valley of the Ganga. This fact has been aptly described by Maulana Altaf Husain Hali of Panipat in the following quatrain :

ਵੇ ਦੀਨ-ਏ-ਹਜ਼ਾਜ਼ੀ<sup>13</sup> ਕਾ ਬੇਬਾਕ ਬੋੜਾ  
ਜੋ ਸੀਹੂੰ ਪੇ ਅਟਕਾ ਨਾ ਜੀਹੂੰ ਪੰ ਠਹਿਰਾ  
ਕੀਏ ਪਾਰ ਬੇ ਜਿਸਨੇ ਸਾਤੋਂ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ,  
ਵੇ ਡੂਬਾ ਦਹਾਨੇ ਮੇਂ ਗੰਗਾ ਕੇ ਆ ਕਰ ।

The task of divine mission of propagating Islam was taken up by Sufis who followed in the train of the invaders. Abul Hasan-al-Hujwiri, a native of Ghazni, better known as Data Ganj Bakhsh settled at Lahore and died there in 1072 A.D. The other famous Sufi leaders of the Punjab were : Baba Farid of Pakpattan, Shams Tabrez of Multan, Shaikh Ahmad of Sarhind and Bu Ali Qalandar of Panipat. The Sufis spread Islam among the conquered through love. Islam became Indianized and Hinduism and Islam found a common platform.

All this shows that the Punjabis fully realized the importance of country's political independence. They were not interested in mere spirituality but also in earthly wealth. They did not place full reliance on fate, *karma* and predetermination.

In the Punjab History, the hero or superman alone did not decide the fate of all, as his actions were moulded by the masses. Success came when the hero and the masses firmly combined in a common cause. Guru Nanak, in his itinerary lasting for a quarter of a century, had not spoken a single harsh word anywhere to anybody. But when he saw scenes of tyranny and cruelty in Babar's camp at Sayyidpur, he even blamed God. Guru Gobind Singh was not a revolutionary by nature and temperament but the hostility of Hindu rajas and the Mughals and close attachment of the Sikhs to him made him a saint-soldier. Banda Bahadur while leaving Nander could never think of becoming a great general and ruler. But the large hordes who joined him on his arrival in the Punjab made him a great conqueror. In our own times, masses made Mahatma Gandhi change his loyalty to the British Empire into its destroyer.

---

13. Hejaz is a province of Arabia, in which the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina are situated.

In the end, I must congratulate the Punjabi University for organising Punjab History Conferences. Through these the attention of Indian scholars is being drawn to the study of history of this most sensitive border province. In its past achievements the Punjab History Conference vies with the bigger institution of Indian History Congress. I feel confident that its present session will also prove equally fruitful.



## Presidential Address

Ancient Section

Dr S.N. Chopra\*

Mr President, fellow historians, ladies and gentlemen :

I take this opportunity to thank the authorities of Punjabi University in general and Professor Kirpal Singh, Professor A. C. Arora and their colleagues in particular for conferring on me the honour of presiding over the ancient section of the eighteenth session of Punjab History Conference. With considerable diffidence, I stand before you in this great historical centre to fulfil the task. I seek your indulgence to admit that I have no special claim to preside over this section. I owe it to the generosity of my friends.

The Punjab is not only the cradle of Indian civilisation and fountain-head of the early human race but has invariably been important factor in synthesizing Asian culture. It is the land of adventurous and sea-faring Harappan people and virile, dynamic and enterprising Aryans. Nurtured in the action-oriented background of the Aryans, its people have imbibed the Vedic teachings of optimism, and energy.

The perpetual dynamism of the Vedic literature, which became inherent in the nature of the people of the region of the Punjab, remained lurking in their minds and burst forth in the historical period, this time not to Aryanise India but to Indianise the rest of Asia and develop an Asian culture based on universalism, love, goodwill and friendship.

The expansion of Indian culture abroad is a unique feature of Indian history. Unique, because of the means she adopted—the means that were peaceful and persuasive with conspicuous absence of any force and the means that laid a new emphasis on the primacy of her ideas.

---

\* Chairman, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

India in the first millennium, was the dominant country transmitting new cultural ideas into the world. During this period, India had a tremendous and pervasive influence. She supplied something to the world which nobody else could deliver. Arnold J. Toynbee describes India as a 'central link' of world civilisation.

The Punjab was the pioneer in the spread of this unique culture abroad. As a border region, the Punjab had varied experience by its contacts with the outside world. On the one side it bore the brunt of the foreign onslaughts and on the other it provided various civilisations with an opportunity to build their spiritual, philosophical and metaphysical framework. The role of the Punjab in the transmission of Indian ideas abroad, worked on different planes. It was as much a gateway to India as a gateway from India. As an intermediary between India and the outside world, its one role was that of a torch-bearer of intellectual conquest and the other at the regional level was that of a centre of interaction and reciprocity.

It must be noted that Indian transmission is neither transplantation nor reciprocity. It is rather receptivity. It generated responses of two kinds—spontaneous and delayed. Whereas in spontaneous response, the movement was free, easy and rapid; in the delayed response the movement initially received resistance but was gradually allowed to prevail. In the light of above observations, we find that the Indian cultural transmission in Central Asia swept over the region without much resistance, but in China it took much longer period to make its debut.

In the Punjab, we find the same predicament in as much as the foreign influence on Saivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Saura cult, the Mother-Goddess cult, etc., led to the division of their cults on traditional and trans-traditional bases. It generated the same feeling in the fields of art and architecture. But gradually, the perseverance at home and abroad resulted in moulding new cultural and thought patterns in the main cultural stream.

In general, transmission resulting from cultural interaction not only infuses new life but generates flexibility to alien ideas and helps in building a healthy new order in the world based on mutual respect and love.

The motivation for cultural mobility has varied in different ages. During the long prehistoric period it was primarily nomadic. In the subsequent first urbanised period of the Harappan age, it gave priority to commerce and trade. With the beginning of the organised religion, intellectual conquest played the key role in diffu-



sion of Indian culture abroad. Among the various organised religions of India, Buddhism followed by Hinduism contributed the maximum to the cause and spread of Indian culture abroad. Of these two religions, Buddhism was the dominant factor in Central and East Asian countries, and Hinduism and Buddhism shared their spoils in South-East Asia. The Punjab, being contiguous to Central Asia and China, played an important role in the dissemination of Indian culture in these regions more vigorously than any other region of India. Buddhism, which was a major factor in this transmission, first conquered the most orthodox citadel of Vedic culture in the Punjab. Then having remodelled it on Buddhist specifications by erecting a chain of monasteries for imparting education, it was able to channelise the valour and strength of the people of the Punjab into a purposeful role of an intellectual transmitter. The new role was no doubt formidable but challenging. With the help of their inherent quality of entrepreneurship and adventure, they were successful in carrying out the cause of transmission of Indian ideas abroad.

The earliest historical contact of the Punjab with Buddhism seems to have taken place during the reign of Aśoka. Various inscriptions belonging to his reign, written in Brahmi, Kharoṣṭhi, Armaic and Greek, found from the region, bear testimony to the existence of Buddhism upto the borders of Persia and South Russia including Afghanistan. According to the Buddhist traditions, however, the Master is said to have visited Kurukshetra in course of his missionary tours and possibly Bhaddiyanagara, i.e. Sialkot, and Anguttarapa, i.e. Agroha in Hissar district. Aśoka was the first Buddhist monarch of India who took a solemn pledge to raise the spiritual standard of not only the Indians but the people at large beyond her borders. He fulfilled his mission by despatching spiritual teachers to far off lands, such as Egypt, Macedonia, Epirus (an ancient district of northern Greece) and Cyrenia in north Africa. Kashmir is also said to have been initiated into Buddhism during the time of Aśoka. The name of Madhyāntika is associated with this region of the Punjab who spear-headed the movement of Buddhism during the reign of Aśoka. Aśoka is also credited with the erection of a number of stupas in honour of the Master and his disciples in the region of the Punjab.

By the time of Puṣyamitra Śunga, Buddhism had been entrenched on the soil of the Punjab so effectively that when he came to Śākalā to decapitate the Buddhist community by offering as much as one hundred dinars for a monk's head, he is believed to have failed miserably in



his mission and with the intervention of the supernatural powers was killed by a Yakṣa, named Kṛmiṣa. Prominence of Buddhism over the Punjab during the reign of Puṣyamitra has further been confirmed by the Tibetan historian, Tārānātha who mentions how Puṣyamitra with the help of an army plundered, ravaged and razed stupas and monasteries, sacred to the Buddhists, from Madhyadeśa as far as Jalandhara, in the Punjab.

The fall of the Mauryan Empire did not nullify these gains. Even after the rise of Greek rule in Bactria which included the Punjab, the influence of Buddhism continued to exist. The emergence of the Gandhara School of Art is a testimony to this fact. The Indo-Greek King, Menander (Milinda), who officially patronised Buddhism, played an important role in establishing Buddhism on the frontiers of India among the Greeks. Once it was patronised by the Indo-Greeks, Buddhism became popular with the foreign nomadic hordes entering India after the fall of the Greek kingdom in Bakh. The political exigency made it obligatory on the part of these foreign hordes to give due respect and patronage to the religion of their subjects.

The history of the times of Menander is substantiated by *Milinda-Pañho*, a Buddhist treatise which has immortalised Menander in the Buddhist world. The text written in Prakrit, explains by way of questions the doubts raised by King Menander regarding various aspects of Buddhism. Nāgasena, the great Buddhist teacher, while removing the doubts of the king, converted him finally to Buddhism. After his conversion, Menander became a Buddhist zealot and did a considerable work for the propagation of Buddhism and is ranked only next to Aśoka the Great, in the Buddhist lore for his positive contribution to Buddhism after having accepted the faith and propagating it during his life time. His fame had reached the Indo-Chinese Buddhist literature. The authenticity of *Milinda-Pañho* as a source book of the time of Menander has been subject to severe criticism and the conversion of Menander to Buddhism is said to be a political gimmick. There is no doubt that the account of the *Milinda-Pañho* is replete with numerous legends of unhistorical character particularly in its second part. But the way the text deals with the whole problem brings home the point that there cannot be any fire without smoke; this becomes true in regard to Menander. The Buddhist tradition would not have piled up stocks of such eulogistic accounts out of the void. He ruled over a vast empire which extended roughly between Bactria, the Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh.

The reign of Kaniṣka is important in the history of Buddhism in

more than one way. Whereas Aśoka introduced Buddhism to the foreign countries, the credit for its permanent settlement on foreign lands, at least in Central Asia, goes to Kaniṣka. Kaniṣka's period is not only known for the fourth Buddhist Council but also coincides with the origin of a new school in Buddhism called Mahāyāna which revolutionised Buddhism so much that it became completely different from the original and pristine Buddhism. The teachings of the new school were so flexible and broad based as to include any local, regional or national elements into it. Above all, the concept of altruism played an important role in the acceptance of Buddhism on the foreign land. Mahāyāna became more predominant a feature in the spread of Buddhism abroad only towards the end of the 4th century or the beginning of the 5th century A.D. Kumārajīva, a great stalwart of Kuche, who had his education in Kashmir, was the first missionary to have spread the doctrines of Mahāyānism in different parts of Central Asia and China.

The political topography of India which emerged in the wake of the establishment of Kuṣāṇa rule, proved more congenial to the spread of Indian culture abroad in which the Punjab became a leading centre of Buddhist learning and philosophy. The Kuṣāṇa empire which extended up to the Pamirs in Central Asia and Persia in the west, included Afghanistan and Tokharestan outside India. It is during this time that the Punjab became not only the political nucleus with Sialkot as the leading capital of the Kuṣāṇas but also the cultural fountain-head during which diffusion of Indian culture into these regions and beyond into the contiguous states viz., eastern Turkistan (modern Sinkiang) and China was at its peak.

In the early centuries of Christian era, the Punjab emerged as an intellectual and cultural hub of India. Various centres of advanced studies in Buddhist learning and philosophy were established in the different regions of the Punjab which not only sent scholars abroad to propagate Buddhism but also attracted scholars from all over the world.

The most flourishing centre of learning was Kashmir. It continued to be so for about a millennium. In the early centuries of the Christian era, Kashmir became a leading centre of Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhism. The patronage of the Kaniṣka group of kings of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty provided a big lever to maintain the momentum in the activities of the Buddhist studies in Kashmir. Kashmir emerged as the most flourishing centre of Buddhist learning in the whole of northern India. Its superiority attracted a number of scholars from abroad, the most famous being Kumārajīva from Kuche, who received education from Bandhudatta.



Kashmir was by far the most popular centre of Buddhist learning which sent the maximum number of Buddhist scholars to propagate Buddhism abroad. Among the stalwarts, the names of Saṃghbhūti, Saṃghadeva, Puṇyatrāta and his pupil, Dharmayaśas, Vimalākṣa, Budhajīva and Guṇavarman are worthy of mention.

Nagarahāra identified with modern Hadda, lying south of Jalalabad, was also an important Buddhist centre inhabited by the Śākyas of Kapilavastu. Buddhabhadra, who descended from Amṛtodana, the uncle of Buddha, known for his independent spirit and scholarship, accompanied Che-Yen, a co-traveller of Fa-Hien, to China after his successful education in Kashmir. He is known for his Chinese translations which he conducted in South China at Hu-Shan and Nanking between 421 A.D. and 429 A.D. He died at Nanking in 429 A.D.

Gandhara was a leading centre of Buddhist art and learning in the early centuries of the Christian era. The most important centre of this region was Puruṣapura (Peshawar). It was not only a metropolitan city during the reign of Kaniṣka but foremost centre of Buddhist studies as well. Mahavana-vihar was a reputed centre of learning at Peshawar. In course of time it produced a galaxy of rare Buddhist scholars out of whom Narāyaṇadeva, Assanga, Vasubandhu, Dharmatrāta, Manorhita, Pārṣvika etc. were most prominent. Assanga and his brother Vasubandhu were propounders of the Vijñānavāda or Yogācāra School of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Jinagupta, along with his teachers Jñānabhadra and Jinayaśas at the Mahāvanavihāra, is best known for propagation of Buddhism in China in the second half of the sixth century A.D.

Takṣaśilā (modern Taxila) was a city par excellence immediately before Alexander's invasion. It was not only a metropolis city but also a great centre of education. The fame of the standard of the University of Taxila had spread far and wide to which the princes of the various kingdoms flocked round to get education in the different fields of learning including polity, warfare and medicine. Chāṇakya after having completed his studies at this centre, was taken on the faculty and as the tradition goes he brought Chandragupta Maurya from Magadha and had him educated here. It remained a flourishing centre of education throughout the Mauryan period. When Buddhism became predominant here, it developed into an important centre of Buddhist studies. An outstanding personality of this institution, Kumāralāta or Kumāralabdha (Tung-Shou in Chinese), being well-versed in the sacred literature of Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy, contributed a lot to the spread of Buddhist culture in Central Asia and

China. He was the founder of Sautrāntika school of Buddhism and has to his credit a number of works.

Udyana (Swat Valley) was another flourishing centre of Buddhism in this region. The Buddhist lore contributes this phenomena to the migration of the Sakya family from Kapilavastu to this region after it was razed to the ground by the invading army of Virudhaka of Kosala. It is stated that two of the four princes who resisted the Kosalan army against the wishes of the Master were banished from their motherland and settled down in Udyana and Nagarahāra. A descendant of this family Vimokṣasena, an outstanding scholar in the Abhidharma or the metaphysical literature of Buddhism, translated a number of Buddhist works into Chinese in the 2nd half of the sixth century A.D. When Hiuan Tsang visited Udyana there were 1400 monasteries with about 18,000 priests belonging to five Buddhist schools viz., the Dharmaguptas, the Mahiṣāskas, the Kāśyapiyas, the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāsamghikas.

Sind did not remain behind in enriching Buddhist thought and creed. It was an important centre of Sammatiya School of Buddhism which had about 10,000 monks residing in several hundreds of monasteries. According to the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuan Tsang, "They were thorough believers in Buddhism . . . of the superior brethren, who leading lives of the lonely seclusion, never relaxed in perseverance, nay attained arhatship." I-Tsing confirms the above statement in as much as it was centre of the Sammatiyas.

Jalandhara became a prominent centre of Buddhist studies probably during the period of the Kuṣāṇas, where according to the Buddhist tradition, fourth Buddhist Council was said to have taken place. However, Jalandhara continued to remain a flourishing centre thereafter in course of which the Nagarodhana monastery developed into an important centre of Buddhist studies. Hiuan-China, native of Sui-Chang (China), stayed in this monastery for four years studying Buddhist scriptures sometimes in the second quarter of the seventh century A.D. Hiuan Tsang also sojourned here for four months studying the *Prakarapada-vibhāṣā-śāstra* from the eminent scholar Candravarma, well-versed in the *Tripitakas*.

In the Takka country (northern Punjab) Devavihāra was a flourishing centre of Buddhist studies where Dharmagupta, born in Lāṭa (Kathiawar), studied and learned about the Buddhist activities in China.

Whereas the Buddhist couriers in the form of scholars and missionaries conducted the intellectual conquest, the Gandhara School



of Art created an atmosphere of Buddha-consciousness among the masses by endearing them to the Buddha in human form through the Bhakti concept of love, compassion and devotion.

The Punjab, thus, had the unique privilege of spearheading and remaining the epicentre of Indian cultural 'thrust' for about five centuries, i.e. from first century A.D. to fifth century A.D., when the mantle was passed on to Nalanda for subsequent transmission abroad. During this period, the Punjab emerged as an intellectual base as well as intellectual corridor through which the Indian ideas grew, filtered and were transmitted abroad. There was not a single major school of contemporary thought with which it did not enter into some sort of a dialogue directly or indirectly without leaving an indelible mark on it.

Afghanistan was a part of the Punjab, both politically and culturally, in the pre-Muslim period. Before and after the spread of Buddhism in Afghanistan, non-Buddhist cults too, especially during the Hindu Shahi period, played an important role in the diffusion of Indian culture in general, and that of the Punjab in particular, in which Kashmir style of art played a significant role. During the Buddhist hegemony, the influence of the Punjab remained strong in which the foundation of Gandhara School of Art contributed maximum. The numerous remains of excavated monuments testify to the glorious chapter. The most striking Buddhist extant remains in Afghanistan are the two colossal images of Buddha, carved in deep niches, 53 metres and 38 metres high respectively which were carved during the later Kuṣāṇa period. Damaged extensively, by marauders, the Archaeological Survey of India has currently been working for their conservation.

The relationship between the Punjab and the Soviet Central Asia comprising the republics of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenia and South Kazakhstan goes back to palaeolithic age about half a million years ago, coming down to the Harappan period. The archaeological excavations by Russian archaeologists have discovered a number of Buddhist town-sites at Termez, Kara-Tepe, Khalchayan, Airatam, Dalverzin-Tepe in Uzbekistan and Kobadiyan, Kouhna-kals, Darshai, Adzhina-Tepe in Tajikistan and Meru in Turkmenia where numerous pieces of Gandhara style sculptures have been found. i

Tokharestan, comprising roughly the republics of South Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, was the most important region in Soviet Central Asia which felt the impact of the Punjab culture. The Tukharas developed their own school of Buddhism called Pāścātya Vai Bhāṣika

which was an off-shoot of Indian School of Vibhāṣā, a branch of the Sarvāstivāda Hinayanism, the main centre of which was the Punjab. The syncretic nature of the philosophy of Vibhāṣā proved very successful in Central Asia and later in China. Central Asia was a melting pot of different cultures and a meeting place of various nations, viz. Indian, Greek, Iranian and Chinese. To accommodate the different shades, it developed an original culture by syncretizing these cultures.

The link of the Punjab with Soviet Central Asia can still be established by the popularity of a number of Punjabi words in the Parya dialect spoken by the Paryas in the valley of river Oxus, the chief town of which is Hissar, about 30 km. to the south-west of Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan Republic. I. M. Oranski, the Soviet ethnographer, who has worked on the Indo-Aryan dialects in Central Asia between 1952-64, throws interesting light on the influence of Punjabi on the Parya language.

Crossing the Pamir mountains, we enter into the Tarim basin (earlier known as Eastern or Chinese Turk-Estan) or Sinkiang province of modern China which is called "Ser-India" or "the innermost heart of Asia". It is bounded on all sides by high mountains, reducing the inland into a desert called Taklamakan. Two regular routes connecting China with the western world including India lay to the north and south of the desert in the foot-hills of the mountains. These routes, in course of time, came to be called the silk-routes. A number of principalities cropped up on these routes. Kashgar, lying in the eastern slopes of Pamirs in Sinkiang, was the starting point of these routes. The northern route passed through, Aksu, Kucha, Karasahr and Turfan and the southern route through Yarkand, Khotan, Niya and Lob-nor. Both these routes converged at Jade Gate near Tun-Huang or the caves of 1000 Buddhas on the Chinese mainland. All these kingdoms of the Tarim Basin were the flourishing centres of Indian culture, ruled by Indian princes and populated by Indian masses. It was veritably a miniature Punjab in Central Asia.

Of the four states, situated along the northern silk-route plying through the Tien-shan foot-hills on way from Kashgar to the Chinese mainland, Kuche was the most important principality which played the same role as Khotan played among the states situated on the southern route.

The fourth century brought Kuche into intimate contact with the region of the Punjab. Kumārajīva, son of Kumārāyaṇa and Jīvā, princess of Kuche, was a great Buddhist personality. He is



credited with the propagation of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Central Asia in a big way and later for introducing it into China for the first time. He translated Indian texts into Chinese in collaboration with a number of Buddhist scholars from the Punjab namely Vimalākṣa, Buddha-yaśas and Buddhabadhra.

A number of Kharoṣṭhi manuscripts in Kharoṣṭhi script have been discovered from the southern states from Khotan to Kroraina (Lou-lan) in the Lob-nor region. Kharoṣṭhi script was the most important script of the Punjab region.

Another interesting practice prevalent among the school children there was the use of the wooden *takhti*, the like of which is still prevalent in the Punjab.

The Gandhara Art influenced the growth of Chinese Central Asian art also. The wall-paintings in Miran are characteristic of this style. The wall-paintings of this region are regarded as typically Gandharan because of the similarity of motifs represented in these paintings with those of the sculptures of Gandhara.

The year 65 A.D. marks an epoch of unparalleled achievement of Buddhism on Chinese soil when the Chinese Emperor Ming-ti of the Han dynasty held a reception for the two Indian Buddhist monks, Dharmarakṣa and Kāśyapa Matanga, in the wake of which commenced a long era of relationship between India and China sustained by common scriptures, culture, values and outlook. In the subsequent centuries, the activities of the Central Asian and earlier Indian Buddhist monks from the Punjab not only carved out a firm place for Buddhism in China but also created an atmosphere of responsibility and cordiality among the Chinese intelligentsia resulting in the foundation of indigenous school of Buddhism, i. e., Chinese Buddhism. Tao-Ngan (312-385 A.D.), a devout Chinese Buddhist, directed all his energies to spread and propagate Buddhism among the Chinese masses. One of his disciples, Hui-Yuan established a Buddhist school called 'The School of White Lotus' at Lu-Shan which played an important role in the life and culture of the Chinese. Fa-Hien opened a new vista of visiting India for the first-hand knowledge and deeper understanding of Buddhism from Indian scholars. He remained in India from 399 to 414 A.D.

Hiuan Tsang was the most important Chinese Buddhist scholar among others who visited India including the Punjab from 629 to 644 A.D. The Chinese Buddhist Encyclopaedia, which is the main source for the study of the Buddhist missionary activities on the soil of China, provides a long list of Punjabi missionaries visiting China.

between the fourth and tenth century.

With Buddhist creed, philosophy and legend went the sculpture of Gandhara School of Art to China. The Kuṣāṇa age was the most flourishing period of its outflow. The grottos to the like of Ajanta and Ellora sprang up at Tun-Huang and Yun-Kang during the period.

The Punjab also contributed to the foundation of Lamaism in Tibet. The real founder of Tibetan form of Buddhism, and its red-hat sect was Padmasambhava who was the greatest expounder of Tantric Buddhism. Lamaism is a mixture of Tantric Buddhism and a native religion, Bon (Bon-po). Padmasambhava was a son of King Indrabhuti of Udyana. In the eleventh century another great Buddhist scholar Atisha from the region of the Punjab founded the Bkah-gdams-pa School which was subsequently called Dge-lugs-pa in the 14th century, of which the present Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader.

Gunavarman, a Buddhist scholar from the Punjab, was the first to undertake missionary work in the countries of South-East Asia. The impact of Gunavarman in the countries of South-East Asia and Far East was as strong and deep-rooted as that of Kumārajīva in Central Asia and China.

According to the Cambodian annals, the Indianisation of Cambodia was undertaken by a banished prince belonging to the kingdom of Indraprastha, situated on the western outskirts of the Yamuna river in the region of the Punjab. The term Cambodia can possibly be a derivation from the Indian form Kambuja, a kingdom located in the north-west frontiers of India contiguous to the Gandhara Kingdom.

Saivism was a predominant form of worship in Cambodia and ancient Champa (i.e. modern Vietnam). Śiva is represented both in the *Linga* and human forms; the *Linga* form was more prominent. Linga of Śiva became the national deity as well as the tutelary deity of Cambodia and Champa.

Indianisation of Asia did not mean the supplanting of the native culture by that of Indian but it was a positive gesture to elevate the indigenous body culture by giving it a mind and soul. It was conciliatory, assimilative and enlightening approach which inspired the indigenous mind to develop independently in an atmosphere of peace and freedom. Central Asian Buddhism developed their own Buddhist conceptions in Central Asia. Similarly Chinese Buddhism developed its own Buddhist schools and so did the Tibetan Buddhism.

Whether it was Buddhism as in regard to Central Asia, China and Tibet or Hinduism as in regard to Cambodia and Vietnam, it was the spirit of adaptability and flexibility that helped the Punjab culture spread into these regions with the same vigour everywhere.



## Vedic Sites of Northern India

O. P. Bharadwaj\*

It is generally agreed that the bulk of early Vedic literature is the product of the region described as Sapta Sindhu or the land of the seven rivers, from the Sarasvatī on the east to the Indus on the west.<sup>1</sup> The Sarasvatī is a popular river of the *Ṛgveda*. The Sindhu or Indus comes next in importance if frequency of mention is taken as the criterion. The Paruṣṇī-Irāvātī or Ravi occurs about five times, the Yamunā thrice, the Asikni or Chenab, the Vipāsa or Beas, the Sutudri or Sutlej and the Gangā twice each and the Vitastā or Jhelum only once.<sup>2</sup> Of the smaller rivers, the Āpayā and Dṛṣadvatī on the east of the Sarasvatī or Ghaggar have received special notice.

Out of the region covered by these rivers, the land between the Sutlej in the north and Yamunā in the east was primarily the scene of activity of the earliest Vedic people. On the south, it was bounded by the region of Khāndava about Delhi and on the west by the contiguous part of Rajasthan.<sup>3</sup> The *Ṛgveda* describes the kindling of sacrificial fires on the banks of the Sarasvatī, the Āpayā and the Dṛṣadvatī, in whose bed the Western Jumna Canal now flows,<sup>4</sup> by Bharata princes<sup>5</sup> and the victorious battles of Sudās on the Sutlej and Beas.<sup>6</sup>

This holy land of the Vedas is, therefore, generally regarded as the birth place of Brahmanic culture and civilisation. It is but natural that it should be invested with great archaeological potential. On the Indian side now this tract can probably boast of the largest number of important Harappan and Pre-Harappan sites. There are, however, a number of ancient sites noticed in Vedic literature which have not attracted the attention of the archaeologists so far. If some of them are properly excavated, it is quite possible that we may stumble upon

\* 110, 24-A, Chandigarh.

1. Das, A.C., *Ṛgvedic India* (Delhi, 1971), p. 24.

2. Macdonell & Keith, *Vedic Index* (Delhi, 1967).

3. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, V.i.i.

4. Bhargava, M.L., *The Geography of Ṛgvedic India* (Lucknow, 1964), p. 55.

5. *Ṛgveda*, III. 23. 4.

6. *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 454.

the crucial evidence required for the equation of the Harappan culture with some stage of Vedic or Post-Vedic civilisation and also for the correct decipherment of the Harappan script.

Here is a brief survey of these sites most of which have been visited by the author alone or in the company of Prof Y. D. Sharma and Shri Devendra Handa of the Panjab University.

(i) **Ailadhana**<sup>7</sup> :

The town of Ludhiana, 30° 56' N, and 75° 52' E, situated on the old Grand Trunk Road, is erroneously believed to have been founded by the Lodis. Actually, it is a very ancient site and finds mention in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyana*<sup>8</sup> under the name of Ailadhāna as a town on the Sutlej. While describing the route taken by Prince Bharata for his hasty return to Ayodhyā on the sudden demise of Daśaratha, the poet takes note of a number of geographical names stating categorically that the party found the noisy, broad-channelled and tortuous Sutlej easily fordable and crossed it at Ailadhāna. Much later, the noted Muslim historian, Mohammed Qasim Firishta, a contemporary of Akbar, spells the name Lodhana. Thus during the long interval of time the name has suffered only the elision of the vowel 'ai' in the process of linguistic change.

The name Ailadhāna literally means the 'seat of Aila' or Ilā's son. Aila was the matronymic of the illustrious King Purūravā who was the grandson of Manu Vaivasvata and son of his daughter Ilā. Since Purūravā, Aila had already become a somewhat mythical figure. By the time of the *Rgveda* the hoary antiquity of the town is obvious. It may indeed be the oldest extant site unless, of course, one associates Harappa with the Hariyūpiyā of the *Rgveda*.<sup>9</sup>

The Sutlej is notorious for shifting its course from time to time and it had in earlier days flowed right by the side of the city. A small channel still exists close by and is called 'Buddha Darya' or the "Old river." One can form an idea of the height of the site by looking at the town from its northern side. Most of the mound is now covered by the city and only a careful look by an expert can tell if it is at all possible to excavate at any spot.

(ii) **Pratisthana**<sup>10</sup> :

7. For identification, see, *Purāna*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, July 1975, pp. 106-117 & Vol. XXI, No. 2, July 1979, pp. 177-193.

8. Venkateshvar Press, Bombay (ed.), II. 68.12.

9. Sethna, K.D., *The Problem of Aryan Origins* (Calcutta, 1980), pp.119-123.

10. For identification see, *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, Vol. XVIII, Parts i-ii (1980), pp. 455-460.



The site of Pratiṣṭhāna is also connected with King Purūravā and is naturally as old as Ailadhāna. The *Purānas* mention it as his capital and locate it on the Gangā, near Prayāga or Allahabad. In Vedic literature, however, Purūravā and his immediate predecessors and successors are associated with the valley of the Sarasvatī. As we have shown elsewhere Purūravā was a monarch of great achievement who is said to have conquered all the seven continents, performed a hundred Aśvamedha sacrifices, introduced three sacrificial fires in place of one and ruled over his extensive kingdom most benevolently but for one lapse for which he fell foul of the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>11</sup>

Pratiṣṭhāna, literally means only a new capital or a second seat of a king's government and the name has been given to several cities in later age. Purūravā's Pratiṣṭhāna, like the town of Ailadhāna, had to be in the Sutlej-Sarasvatī Doab and it has been identified with the town of Patran located 29° 55' N and 76° 5' E, not far from the Ghaggar-Sarasvatī, at the junction of roads converging from Patiala, Bhatinda, Jakhal, Hissar-Tohana and Jind, most of which are ancient towns. Tohana is the Tauṣāyana of Pānini,<sup>12</sup> Bhatinda has been identified with Vāṭadhāna<sup>13</sup> and Jind is the Jayantī of the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>14</sup>

The site of the mound locally called Chichadwala Theh<sup>15</sup> is imposing enough to agree with the antiquity invested in it as a result of its identification with Pratiṣṭhāna.

### (iii) Manuṣa :

The village now called Manas and located about 5 Kms. to the west of Kaithal is the site of the town and tank mentioned as Mānuṣa in the *R̥gveda*.<sup>16</sup> It is a big village covering an elevation consisting of the accumulation of old cultures. The Painted Grey-Ware, tentatively associated with the *Mahābhārata* sites, and Early Historic Plain Red-Ware were picked up by us from the periphery of the mound which in all likelihood conceals much earlier remains. A large water body, now called Mansarovar (Mānuṣasarovara ?) is a notable feature towards the north and north-east of the village. Old

11. *Harivamsa Purāna* (Gita Press ed.), pp. 26-49.

12. Agrawala, V.S., *India As known to Panini* (1973), p. 74.

13. V. S. Agrawala in *Kadambini*, Oct. 1962, cited by V.K. Mathur, *Aitihasika Sthānāvali* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 581-583; *Purana*, Vol. XXI, No. 2, July 1979, p. 192.

14. *Mbh.*, Vana, 83.19.

15. Information obtained by the courtesy of Sh. G.B. Sharma of the Punjab Govt., Archaeology Department.

16. Bhargava, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-33.

men of the village are aware of its antiquity but no tradition connecting it with any personality or event has survived.

In the *Ṛgveda*, it is noted along with the sacred Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī and Āpayā, rivers as a spot where sacrificial fire was kindled by Bharata princes.<sup>17</sup> Later, in the great epic and the *Purāṇas*, it is included in the list of *tīrthas* of Kurukṣetra.<sup>18</sup>

(iv) **Ilaspada :**

A big old mound by the side of the modern village of Sherḡarh about 2 Kms. to the south-east of Kaithal is believed to be the site of the place named Ilāspada or Ilāyāspada in the *Ṛgveda* and later in the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>19</sup> It is supposed to have got its name from Ilā, the first known ancestress of the so called Lunar dynasties.

The old mound is both high and extensive. It rises to about forty feet from the base and a small Śiva temple has now been built on the top. There is a lake not far from the mound on which pottery and brick-bats lay scattered at the time of our visit. Bricks measuring 8½"×14" and 10"×14" could also be seen and the slopes of the mound revealed remains of house structures. In the pottery, scattered on the surface, the Early Historic Plain Red-Ware predominated. The priest of the Śiva temple had a copper piece which, although resembling a Kuṣāṇa coin, had been rubbed beyond recognition. He has picked up from the site a dabber and some old vases also. Another dabber was lying nearby.

Another *Ṛgvedic* name *Vivasvat Sadana* (the dwelling place of Vivasvat) is also supposed to refer to Hāspada.<sup>20</sup>

(v) **Kapisthala :**

The name of the present town of Kaithal, situated 29° 48' N and 76° 26' E about 48 Kms. west-south-west of Kurukṣetra on the Ambala-Hissar Road, has evolved from Kapiṣṭhala with which is associated the Vedic text *Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Samhitā*.<sup>21</sup> The town is also noticed by the celebrated grammarian Pāṇini and others much later by Alberuni.<sup>22</sup> A silver coin of Apollodotus and some coins of Sāmantadeva were found here.<sup>23</sup> The name literally means 'the abode

17. *Ṛgveda*, III, 23, 4.

18. *Mbh.* Vana, 83. 65-66; *Vāmana Purāṇa*, Saromāhātmya, 14.50.

19. Bhargava, *op.cit.*, p. 30 ff.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

21. Ed. Raghu Vira (Lahore, 1932), Introduction, pp. 1-2.

22. *Alberunis' India*, Vol. I, p. 206.

23. *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. III, No. 2, July 1971, p. 3.



of monkeys' and the local tradition connecting it with the monkey god. Hanumān, is supported by a temple dedicated to his mother Añjanā.

Although the old mound is fully covered by the present town, there is no scope for doubting the Vedic association of the town and its great antiquity, a probe into which should be highly rewarding.

(vi) **Asapdivat :**

Āsandīvat or the present town of Asandh,<sup>24</sup> lies on the old bed of the Dṛṣadvatī about 32 Kms. south-west of Karnal. This important Vedic site finds mention in the *Aitareya*<sup>25</sup> and *Śatapatha*<sup>26</sup> *Brāhmaṇas* as the capital of the great king, Janamejaya Pārikṣita, who is said to have performed a horse sacrifice here. The town retained its importance for long and it has been noticed in Sūtra literature<sup>27</sup> apart from grammatical works of Pāṇini and others.

A considerable part of the present town stands on the ancient mound from which, at one place, rises to a height of more than sixty feet, a circular brick-wall eminently resembling the Dhamekh Stūpa of Sarnath. The structure undoubtedly represents the remains of a Buddhist stūpa which, in view of its large-sized bricks (10"x14") is not later than the Kuṣāṇa period. People describe it as the fort of King Jarāsandha of the Great Epic but this belief is evidently born of phonetic affinity between the two names.

The site has also yielded Painted Grey-Ware which is associated with the towns mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. Definite references in *Brāhmaṇa* literature, projecting it as the capital of the great king, Janamejaya, invest it with special significance from the archaeological point of view.

(vii) **Karoti**

The name of the small town of Kāroti, located on the southern or the left side of the old Dṛṣadvatī bed about 1½ Kms. to the south-east of Diplana Railway Station on the Hanumangarh-Sadulpur branch of the Northern Railway has suffered absolutely no change during the past more than three thousand years. It appears, in the age of the *Brāhmaṇas*, as a seat of the fire-cult par excellence.<sup>28</sup> In the *Śatapatha*

24. For identification see, *V.I.J.* Vol. III, pt. ii (Sept., 1965), pp. 278-281.

25. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VIII. 21.

26. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XIII. 5.4.2.

27. See, for instance *Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, XVI.8.27-28;9.i.

28. *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 151.

*Brāhmaṇa* (IX 5.2.15) Śāṇḍilya, the principal authority on the building of altars for the sacred fires,<sup>29</sup> describes it as the place where Tura Kāvāṣeya made a fire-altar for the gods. Tura was the priest of Janamejaya Pārikṣita, a great conqueror and performer of horse-sacrifice whom he anointed with Aindra Mahābhiṣeka. This Janamejaya was possibly an ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas.<sup>30</sup> The present village of Kāroṭi is a small habitation of about 237 souls, situated 29° 10' N and 74° 50' E. The mound covers about 200 bighas (50 acres) of land and is about four meters in height, 12 Kms. to the east of Nohar by crow-flight and about 5 Kms. to the south-east of the well-known pre-historic site of Sothi in a region which is known for the abundance of pre-historic and proto-historic sites.

The site was explored by a party led by Devendra Handa<sup>31</sup> and remains of Sothi as well as pre-Harappan and Harappan material including pottery in various designs, terracotta cakes, terracotta animal figurines and shell-bangle pieces, etc. were found. It is likely to contain evidence of a continuous occupation from pre-Harappan times.

#### (viii) Srughna

Represented by a small village now called Sugh, the town of Srughna<sup>32</sup> enjoyed considerable importance in ancient times. The old mound lies 30° 9' N and 77° 23' E, about 5 Kms. to the east of Jagadhari, Yugandhara of Sanskrit literature. The earliest reference to Srughna occurs in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*<sup>33</sup> where it has been apparently misspelt as Tūrghna. By this time the town had acquired enough prestige to lend its name to the surrounding region since the text describes it as the northern half of the land of Kurukṣetra. Thereafter, till about the 12th century A.D.,<sup>34</sup> it always remained in lime-light. One reason probably was its location on an important east-west trade route. The road from Mathura to this town has been called Sraughna by Pāṇini.<sup>35</sup> It is also mentioned by the great Varāha

29. Weber Albrecht, *The History of Indian Literature* (Varanasi, 1974), p.120.

30. The existence of more than one Janamejayas is now generally accepted. See, A.K. Chatterji, *Political History of Pre-Buddhist India* (Calcutta, 1980), p. 42 f.

31. For his two articles, see, *Maruśrī*, pt. 1, No. 1 (Oct.-Dec. 1971), pp. 10-16; No.3 (Apr.-June 1972), pp.25-30.

32. For a brief note see *Journal of Haryana Studies* (J.H.S.), Jan. 1971, Vol. III. No.1. pp.8-15 and for a report on excavation at Sugh, see, Suraj Bhan, *J.H.S.* Vol.IX, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 1-49.

33. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, V.i.i.

34. The site has yielded coins of Tomara and Chauhan rulers also. See, Handa, *op.cit.*

35. Agrawal, V.S., *op. cit.*, p.431.



Mihira<sup>36</sup> and in the Buddhist works like *Mahāmāyūrī*<sup>37</sup> and *Divyāva-dāna*<sup>38</sup> and described in some detail by Hicun Tsang<sup>39</sup> who visited it in the 7th century A.D. and found an Aśokan stūpa and a monastery to the south-west of the city apart from many other stūpas.

The site has been excavated on a modest scale<sup>40</sup> and it has yielded Painted Grey-Ware sherds of inferior quality associated with Northern-Black-Polished-Ware and Fine Grey-Ware datable to circa 600-500 B.C. Among terracotta figurines, a plaque with a child, seated in a natural pose with a *tukhti* and having a lesson on the *svaras* (vowels) dated to the Śuṅga period is of particular interest. Silver punch-marked coins, silver issues of Menāder, and inscribed and uninscribed copper cast-coins representing the period from 500 B.C. to 100 B.C. and more recent coins of the Chauhans and Tomaras deserve mention among other finds.

#### (ix) Khandavaprastha

The sixteenth century citadel of Purana Qilā (Qalā-i-Kuhna) is supposed to represent the site of Indraprastha, known as capital of the Pāṇḍavas in early literature. As a matter of fact Indarpat is one of the popular names of the fort which was built on the original Hindu foundation by Humayun.<sup>41</sup> It has revealed continuous occupation from the Mauryan to early Mughal period during excavations undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India. The numerous relics and remains of its long and chequered past include an inscription of Aśoka (273-236 B.C.) engraved on a rugged rock of an outcrop of the Aravallis, near Srinivaspuri, west of Kalkaji temple, discovered in 1966.<sup>42</sup>

Indraprastha is well-known to the epics, and the Purāṇas and later Sanskrit literature. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*<sup>43</sup> equates it with Khāṇḍavaprastha. So does the *Padma Purāṇa*,<sup>44</sup> according to which it was a

36. XIV. 21.

37. *Mahāmāyūrī*, ii. 23, 60.

38. Ed. Vaidya, P.L. (Darbhanga, 1959), p. 47.

39. Watters Thomas, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, 2nd Indian ed. (Delhi, 1973).

40. See, Suraj Bhan's report, *op. cit.*

41. Dey, N.L., *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India*, 3rd ed. (Delhi, 1971), p. 77.

42. Sharma, Y.D., *Delhi And its Neighbourhood* (Delhi, 1974), p. 1 f.

43. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X. 73. 32-33.

44. *Padma Purāṇa*, Uttara, 64.

part of the Khāṇḍava forest which was situated on the Yamunā. The *Mahābhārata*<sup>45</sup> calls it a big place—Bṛhatsthala—and the *Jātakas*<sup>46</sup> describe it as spread over seven *yojanas* which suggests that it had already grown into a big city. The episode, of the burning of the Khāṇḍava forest<sup>47</sup> by Agni with the help of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa and the large scale destruction of the Nāgas, Piśācas Yakṣas and Asuras is probably based on a remote tradition regarding the urbanisation of the region which undoubtedly took place in very ancient times. Khāṇḍavaprastha is associated not only with Yudhiṣṭhira but also with much earlier Vedic kings like Purūravā, Nahuṣa and Yajāti.<sup>48</sup>

Khāṇḍava finds mention in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*<sup>49</sup> as the southern half of the sacrificial altar of Kurukṣetra. Much earlier the *Pañcaviṃśa*,<sup>50</sup> one of the oldest Brāhmaṇas, mentions it as the venue of a sacrificial session undertaken by the sages Dṛti and Vātavat in olden times. Another Brāhmaṇa that names it is the *Śātyayanaka*.<sup>51</sup> The site, therefore, deserves a closer attention than it has received so far.

#### (x) Prthudaka

The town of Pehoa, situated 29° 56' N and 76° 35' E on the Prācī or eastern Sarasvatī, about 25 Kms. west of Thanesar, is undoubtedly the well-known Prthudaka<sup>52</sup> of the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas. It is placed strategically on the Ambala-Kaithal metalled road and connected by rail and road with Thanesar and Narwana.

Rājaśekhara, in his *Kāvyamīmāṃsa*,<sup>53</sup> describes it as the eastern limit of Uttarāpathā and it is frequently mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas. It has given us two important inscriptions of Pratihāra period, the Garibnath Temple Inscription of 882 A.D. and a Prāśasti of King Mahendrapāla also of circa 9th century A.D.<sup>54</sup> Availability of the Painted Grey-Ware<sup>55</sup> pushes back the antiquity of this site to beyond 1000 B.C. The town lies on a very high mound which is covered with habitation. The site is associated with Ṛṣi Viśvāmitra. Another old

45. Dey, *op.cit.*, p. 77.

46. *Mahāśutasoma Jātaka*, Fausboll, Vol. V., p. 484.

47. *Mbh.* Ādi, Chs. 221-226.

48. *Mbh.* Ādi, 206 (southern recension after V. 25).

49. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, V. i. i.

50. *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, XXV. 3.6.

51. *Vedic Index*, I, p. 215.

52. See, *Purāṇa*, Vol. IX, No. 2, July 1967. pp. 297-306.

53. Sharma, Kedarnath, *Kavyamīmāṃsa* (Patna, 1954), pp. 227, 291.

54. See, Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, II, pp. 224-226 & XIV, pp. 101-102, 131-132.

55. Lal, B. B., Report on Excavation of Hastinapura, *Ancient India*, X-XI.



site called Arnai covers a big mound near the confluence of the Thanesar-Sarasvatī and Aruṇā-Markanda at a short distance.

Although the earliest literary reference to the site occurs in the *Mahābhārata*, the name Pṛthūdaka owes its origin to king Pṛthu, son of Vena, who is mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Atharvaveda* apart from many other Vedic works like the *Kāṭhaka Samhitā* and *Pañcavimśa, Śatapatha, Taittirīya* and *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇas*.<sup>56</sup> He is said to be the seer of *Ṛgveda* X.148, while *Ṛgveda* X.93.14 describes him as one of the richest persons. According to *Atharvaveda*, VIII.10.24, he was the milker, Manu Vaivasvata, the calf and the earth, the cow who yielded the milk of agriculture and crops. He is remembered as the first of consecrated kings, lord of both, the worlds of men and animals and inventor of agriculture.<sup>57</sup>

Evidently Pṛthu was an eminent ruler who also composed Vedic mantras. The town associated with him has an obvious claim to a hoary antiquity which is supported by archaeological evidence.

It will be noted that out of these ten sites, two are located in the Punjab, one in Rajasthan and the rest in Haryana. In this region only the Vedic site of Vinasāna mentioned in the *Brāhmaṇas* and represented by Kalibangan has been properly excavated<sup>58</sup> where the results appear to suggest the equation of the Harappan culture with the age of the *Atharvaveda* and later Vedic literature.<sup>59</sup> A thorough probe at a few more Vedic sites is necessary to confirm or amend this equation.

56. *Vedic Index*, II, p. 16.

57. Rahurkar, V. G., *The Seers of the Ṛgveda* (Poona, 1964), pp. 286-87.

58. Thapar, B. K. *Ancient Cities of the Indus*, ed. by Possehl (Delhi, 1979), pp. 196-202.

59. Bharadwaj, O.P., 'The identification of Vinasāna and some consequential observations'—A paper presented at the Shantiniketan Session of the A. I. O. C. 1980 and published in *Svasti Śrī B.Ch. Chhabra Felicitation Volume* (Delhi, 1983), pp. 205-224.

## Religious Beliefs and Practices in Pratimanatakam

K. K. Shah\*

Almost about half a century ago Dr A. D. Pusalkar produced his scholarly monograph on Bhāṣa<sup>1</sup> and set at rest a number of controversies concerning the playwright. Vast, indeed, was the canvass, he chose to work upon, and that naturally necessitated neglecting minor details which incidentally reflected the world and time of playwright. He did discuss the picture of religious life as emerging out of the works of Bhāṣa and devoted a separate chapter to it as well, but concerned as he was, with all the plays, he concentrated only upon their salient features. In present paper, those facts of religious life that found place in the *Pratimā-nāṭkaṁ* of Bhāṣa<sup>2</sup> have been discussed.

The playwright has been placed in the period of Ugrasena Mahāpadmananda, the precursor of Chandragupta Maurya, and thus, the life reflected in his plays should be taken as belonging to the pre-Mauryan period.<sup>3</sup> Though, the drama under consideration draws its inspiration from the second and third books of the *Rāmāyana*, yet the poet has taken only the story, building thereafter a superstructure of his own. In fact, there are number of departures from the epic. The very statue-house, from which the title of the play takes birth, is an example of his originality.<sup>4</sup> We do not know the place or area he hailed from, but Dr Pusalkar has concluded that he belonged to Northern India and so, by and large, his work should be taken as containing a picture of the society of this region.

Act III of the drama acquaints us with the existence of temples in the age of Bhāṣa and their ostentation on special occasions. No sooner it opens than we meet Sambhavaka asking explanations of the Sudhākara<sup>5</sup> in regard to his instructions about the Pratimāgraha which is in no way different from a temple for all practical purposes. In

---

\*Lecturer, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

1. Pusalkar, A. D., *Bhāṣa—A Study* (Delhi, 1940).

2. For the purposes of this paper, S. M. Paranjape, (ed.), *Pratimānāṭakaṁ of Bhāṣa* (Poona, 1930) has been used.

3. Pusalkar, A. D., *op. cit.*, p. 83.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

5. Paranjape, S. M., *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.



fact, Bharata takes it as one and offers his salutations to the deities enshrined within. Ordinarily, the deity inside any temple could easily be identified from the kind of weapon or banner generally seen from a distance. The dialogues and description concerning Pratimāgraha leave us in no doubt that public temples had come into being and icon-worship was an essential feature of the religious life revealed by Bhāṣa.

Festivities on full moon marked the life in some temples whereas for some others they were the usual routine. Bharata is literally bewildered at seeing sands spread out, doors decorated with floral garlands, walls painted with five-finger impressions in sandal pigment and flowers and *lājās* elegantly arranged.<sup>6</sup> Earlier, we are told by Saṁbhavaka that the forthcoming visit of the Queen mother was the occasion needing special cleaning, white-washing and ornamenting of the temple.<sup>7</sup> It is a vivid picture that we get of contemporary Pratimāgraha.

Belief of people in the impact of heavenly bodies on human fortunes is beautifully reflected in the instructions of preceptors given to Bharata before entering Ayodhyā. He is advised to halt at the outskirts till the period of the Kṛttika constellation is over, and to enter the capital only when Rohiṇi commences.<sup>8</sup> We do not possess any text bearing on astrology or astronomy belonging to Bhāṣa's time or prior to him, yet this reference indicates the advanced knowledge of the people about heavenly bodies, their positions and popular beliefs in their auspicious and inauspicious effect on man's life. And such was the sanctity of the orders of preceptors that Bharata readily obeyed in spite of his irrepressible eagerness to meet his near and dear ones. While doing so, he casually mentions the contemporary practice of halting for a while on the outskirts before entering a city. This practice perhaps later developed into constructing temples at the gates of cities thereby enabling the traveller to stop conveniently. The Pratimāgraha of Ayodhyā was also located at the outskirts inviting Bharata to meet his manes.

A general impression current among us is that śūdras were outside the pale of Aryan society, at least from the later Vedic period onwards. But our play indirectly reveals in the words of Bharata that a śūdra was not only entitled to enter a temple, but he could also offer his salutations as well, the only difference being whereas the upper three *varṇas* did so with *mantras*, he did silently.<sup>9</sup>

---

6. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

Complete hold of caste system also finds a clear reflection. The hurry and care with which the Devakulika prevents Bharata from offering his salutations<sup>10</sup> to the statues shows that Brāhamaṇas believed in and maintained their superiority over Kṣatriyas.

Although the institution of temple had already gained firm footing, Vedic sacrifices held their own. In them lay the supreme interest of the Brāhamaṇas; for the temple-keeper proudly proclaims King Dilīpa as having ignited the lamp of religion and performed viśvajīta sacrifice involving expenditure. Not much different are his observations on King Aja who washed off the dust of contamination by means of sacrificial ablutions. Sumantra,<sup>11</sup> the Chief Minister, confirms this in Act IV. From Laksamaṇa, in the same Act, we learn that Rāghu too, was so deeply devoted to sacrifice that he emptied his coffers for performing them.

That Pratimāgraha of the play was not a regular temple but a temporal one which is amply clear in the words of Bharata who fails to notice any emblem indicating deity inside. This is further confirmed by Sumantra who says that entry to it was unrestricted and any traveller could resort to it without the offering of any salutation. Dr R. S. Sharma has read in it the Kuṣāṇa practice of erecting *devakulas*, housing statues of dead rulers,<sup>12</sup> and from the inscriptional evidence he has adduced, it may be concluded that a sort of cult of the dead king was initiated and promoted by introducing such a practice.

Performing *Śrāddha* ceremony for the manes was prominent religious practice of the period., After his exile from Ayodhyā and learning of the demise of Daśaratha, Lord Rāma is shown extremely anxious to arrange a befitting *Śrāddha* for his departed father. He found it difficult to decide upon a special preparation, and more so when being a forest dweller his choice was severely restricted. Rāvaṇa seized the opportune moment and made entry as an ascetic well-versed in various *śāstras*. He mentions *Prāchetas*<sup>13</sup> as highest authority on *Śrāddha* ceremony. Simplifying the problem for Rāma, he says that anything given with *Śrāddhā* constitutes *Śrāddha*. But on Rāma's insistence to suggest something 'befitting Rāma's father, as well as 'Rāma himself' he specifically mentions the *Kuśa*, grass, among the growing plants, the *Kalaya* among the vegetables....<sup>14</sup>

10. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

12. Sharma, R. S., *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India* (Delhi, 1959), p. 237.

13. Paranjape, S. M., *op. cit.*, p. 124.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 125.



## Naga Worship in Ancient Punjab

Sukhninder Kaur Dhillon\*

Sacred stones, trees and animals occupied an important place in the primitive religions of India. However, "the worship of the animals arose independently from that of God, but has got fused with it."<sup>1</sup> The animal worship remained a very common part of religion in ancient India. The Indus people worshipped bull as sacred animal while the Vedic Aryan had shown great respect to the cow. "But no animal is so important and so widely spread as the serpent, which is either religiously worshipped or feared all over the world, except in certain cold countries where it is not found."<sup>2</sup>

The cult of serpent worship "exists in many forms whether of a single serpent or of species, of a serpent embodying a spirit or god, of a real or imaginary serpent represented in an image, or of a serpent associated with divinity or of a purely mythical reptile."<sup>3</sup>

Serpent worship is common throughout India in sculptural form and in the form of a living animal. The worship of a living snake is "especially resorted to for prosperity and to bestow the fertility on barren women."<sup>4</sup>

The motive behind serpent worship seems to be the fear of these reptiles. "The animal is dreaded and revered on account of the mysterious dangers associated with it, its stealthy habits, the cold fixity of its gaze, its sinuous motion, protrusion of its forked tongue and the suddenness and deadliness of its attack."<sup>5</sup>

The association of the serpent with various phenomena is also believed to be the cause of its worship. It is believed that serpent is abode of spirits of the dead and in ancient times deceased rulers were also

---

\*Senior Research Fellow, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Sinha, B. C., *Serpent Worship in Ancient India* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 15.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
3. Hastings, James (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XI (New York, 1934), p. 399.
4. Sinha, B.C., *op. cit.*, Preface.
5. Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

worshipped in the form of snakes.<sup>6</sup>

The serpent is the personified power of nature and is associated with water spirits. Serpents are said to haunt lakes and rivers and that is why the nāga temples are found near the water courses and springs.

The origin of the serpent worship goes back to early Vedic period. The Vedic association of this cult may be "most probably the result of the cultural contact of Aryans with the previous settlers of India."<sup>7</sup>

Serpent worship does not seem to be fully developed in Rigvedic period but we find the growth of this cult in later Vedic period. In Vedic times "serpent worship is not only known but prevalent."<sup>8</sup> In *Rigveda* 'Ahi-bundhya' which means the 'serpent of deep' represented the beneficent aspect of Ahi-Vritra. The Vritra form of Ahi was conceived as the great enemy of Indra. The serpent "Vritra was slain down by Indra and imprisoned waters were released."<sup>9</sup>

Hymns of *Rigveda* give very little details of serpent worship but it is evident that the beneficent and dreaded powers of serpents were conceived in early Vedic period. In *Rigveda* serpents appear as antagonistic powers opposed to the gods, sometimes as friendly protecting spirits.<sup>10</sup>

Passages referring to the serpents also occur in *Atharvaveda* and *Yajurveda*. Many of them are resorted to avert the danger of the serpents. Various snake-gods are mentioned by name in the *Atharvaveda*. Five among them, Tiras' ciraji, Prdaku, Srajo, Kalmasagrivo and Savitro were mentioned as 'raksita' or the guardians of the southern, western, northern, eastern and upper quarters.<sup>11</sup>

Epic and Puranic tales also indicate the existence of serpent worship. Nagas have been mentioned as the sons of Kadru and many beliefs and myths were associated with them. For example, the account of 'Sarapabali' in *Grhyasutras* mentions two-fold purpose of honouring and warding off the snakes. The divine snakes are divided into three groups pertaining to earth, sky and heaven.

Serpent worship is also deeply related to Buddhism. Buddhist

6. Still in the modern age, especially in the old palaces, the living snakes are worshipped as the deceased rulers. One such tradition, I found, was at Jaipur, Hawa Mahal, where I was shown small living snakes moving in a small pond inside the palace. The local people generally believe them to be the spirits of the dead rulers and worship them.

7. Banerjea, J. N., *The Development of Hindu Iconography* (Delhi, 1974), p. 345.

8. Hopkins, E. W. (ed.), *The Religions of India* (London, 1902), p. 102.

9. *Rigveda*, I: 100.150.

10. Sinha, B. C., *op. cit.*, p. 16.

11. Banerjea, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 345.



texts are full of stories relating to nagas or serpents. The Buddhist art and architecture is also full of nāgas depicting them in the form of divine, semi-divine beings. "In the early Buddhist art of central India, Gandhara and Amaravati are to be understood as representing the Naga assuming sometimes the almost complete human form in the presence of the Buddha."<sup>12</sup> In *Jataka* stories nagas are described as guardians and the distributors of wealth including magical properties.

On the whole it must be admitted that "under the influence of Buddhist ideals the character of the ancient serpent-demons has become strangely altered and has acquired an ethical value which certainly it did not possess in a more primitive stage."<sup>13</sup> Thus, serpent worship occupies an important position in Buddhism also.

In early medieval period Śiva is occasionally represented holding a nāga in his hand and around his neck but serpents are not associated with Śiva as an object of worship. On other side serpents played an important role in Vaiṣṇavism. Śeṣa is deeply associated with Vaisṇava traditions. Mostly Śeṣa is seen spreading its hood over Viṣṇu and his *avtaras*.

In *Rajtaringani*, Kalhaṇa also mentions that the nāgas remained the popular deities in Kashmir and were mostly regarded as water-spirits granting timely rain for the crops.

The whole of ancient Indian literature is full of references to the nāga or serpent worship. The serpent is worshipped as living animal and it has great reverence in the folklore of Punjab including the Punjab hills.<sup>14</sup>

In north-west India, serpent worship was fully prevalent right from ancient period. It is said that Kurukshetra was one of the most important centres of nāga worship. Some of the sculpture and other archaeological remains found at Kurukshetra reflect that Kurukshetra region was important centre of nāga worship.<sup>15</sup> Hiuen Tsang on his way to Taxila had seen a place which he supposed to be the abode of the nāgas. Later on, Cunningham identified this place not far from Hasan Abdal.<sup>16</sup> Elapatra, the snake-god was adored as the regent of water in this area.<sup>17</sup>

12. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

13. Vogel, J. P., *Indian Serpent-Lore* (reprint, New Delhi, 1972), p. 136.

14. Crooke, William, *Religion and the Folklore of Northern India* (New Delhi, 1925), p. 392.

15. *Mahabharata*, III. 89 : 9 and 52: 208; S.S. Parani, *Kurukshetra in Vamana Purana* (Calcutta, 1976), p. 70.

16. Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

17. Sinha, B. C., *op. cit.*, p. 48.

In Punjab plains serpent worship is widely spread, however, in the lower hills it is associated with the cult of Devi, the mother-goddess. "Though she is not connected with the springs like the nāgas or the serpent deities, but it is common to find a Nāga and a Devi temple side by side and common attributes are assigned to both."<sup>18</sup>

In Chamba, the Nāga is worshipped under the name of Bāski Nāga. The temple of Bāski Nāga contains an image which represents the vizir of Nāga king. Kulu Valley is also the important centre of nāga-worship. Here Bāski Nāga is regarded as the chief of its tribe or the father of the nāgas scattered in that region. In Kangra Valley, the nāga shrines at Shibu-ka-Than, Saloh, Tripur and Nagani near Nurpur are frequently visited by the worshippers.<sup>19</sup>

In the Punjab hills images of the snakes are kept in every house. "The snake is put in charge of the homestead, and is held responsible that no dangerous snake enters it."<sup>20</sup> The worship of such snakes is done at ant-hills and the oblations of sugar, rice and millet are offered.

In upper hills of Punjab the serpent is adored even upto the high altitudes of Ropand Pass and "some harmless snakes, known as Nāga-Kīrī 'worms of the Nāg' are adored, probably because the cobra is rarely found."<sup>21</sup>

Guga is supposed to be the greatest of the snake-gods, and its worship is another form of serpent-cult. The origin of this cult can be traced in the origin of Gujras. Ghogha Chauhān was bestowed upon by his serpent-brother that "whenever he needed it, he should send for it and then it would come and save him."<sup>22</sup> Ghogha Chauhān was so much respected that whenever a serpent appeared his song was chanted.<sup>23</sup> Guga's close association with serpent worship is evident from the Punjab folk-lore.<sup>24</sup> Guga is invoked not only to cure the snake bites but also to bestow sons and good fortunes.<sup>25</sup>

In Punjab two ancient shrines of Guga are found, one at Chhappār on southern border of Ludhiana district and the other at Rai Kot.<sup>26</sup>

18. Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

19. Charak, S. S., *History and Culture of Himalyan States*, Vol. III (New Delhi, 1979), p. 129; Brij Narain Sharma, *Social Life in Northern India* (Delhi, 1966), p. 180.

20. Crooke, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 387-88; K. M. Munshi, *Glory that was Gurjaradesh* (Bombay, 1954), pp. 388-89.

22. Crooke, *op. cit.*, p. 384.

23. Munshi, K. M., *op. cit.*, p. 388.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Sinha, B. C., *op. cit.*, p. 72.

26. *Ibid.*



The famous festival associated with serpent-worship is Nāg-Panchami which falls on the fifth day of the bright fortnight of Sawan. On this day the nēgas are either made or painted on the walls and they are worshipped with full devotion. Oblations are offered before the images or on the ant-hills supposing them as the abode of serpents. Nāg-Panchami is celebrated throughout the whole of Punjab and this also testifies "the feelings of awe and veneration which the serpent evokes in the minds of the population since earliest times."<sup>7</sup>

Thus, it seems that in northern region especially in Punjab and upper hills serpent worship still holds a prominent place in religion and folk traditions.

---

27. Fergusson, James, *Tree and Serpent Worship* (reprint, New Delhi, 1971), p. 75.

# The Stupa of Sanghol

K. K. Rishi\*

## Summary

Situated on the outskirts of Sanghol, the Stupa of Sanghol, in its foundation structures found in fair state of preservation, provides evidence about the architecture of Kushānas. About fifty metres from the fortification walls, a partially excavated mound named S. G. -5, looks like a stupa and monastery complex proving the presence of Buddhist religion in the region in those days. However, nothing is available to help to remake the structural map of the stupa. Still, things like coins and an inscription in Kharosti on a T/C casket lid, etc., help us in dating the monument.

Horizontal excavations at the site have laid bare several different structures at that place. Pattern of structure—a hub shown by a diametrical void of 3.24 metres with spokes represented by brick walls of 37 centimetre width proves that the main stupa was constructed on the pattern of 'Wheel of the Law.' Other details, like radial walls intersected by different circular walls with different width and numbers, confirm the structural pattern.

Construction pattern, which emerges from ruins, is probably like this : It has a brick enclosure of about ninety centimetre thickness and about sixteen centimetres in height. There is a pavement, probably a *pradakshina* path that looks like going around the main stupa, first turning towards the east, then to the north and again seems to be turning. It has been robbed at different places. Beaten *surkhi* and lime lie on its sides. Outside the *pradakshina* path is a rectangular structure giving impressions of pillars of a gate. Towards the north are the foundations of the monastery complex. This complex, consisting of several cells, appears to be the dwelling place of monks. All these cells are masonry constructions.

Votive stupas or small stupas, found in circular plinths as S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>3</sub> built of Kushāna bricks, are of later dates. Evidence about miscellaneous types of structure is also available.

However, the remains of these buildings provide us with a fair idea about the style of architecture, state of Buddhist religion and probable time of their raising.

—Editor

---

\*Department of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museum and Archives. Punjab, Chandigarh.



## An Ancient Trade Centre—Prithudaka

Ashvini Agrawal\*

Prithudaka, modern Pehowa, meaning the pool of Prithu, sometimes called Pehewa, is a very sacred place of pilgrimage in the Kurukshetra district of Haryana. It is said to have been founded by King Prithu, who, according to Puranic accounts, first introduced civilized life on this earth which yielded riches on his bidding. Even the earth is named as Prithivi after the name of that great king.<sup>1</sup> The ancient city has almost been razed to the ground by the Muslim invaders. Numerous pieces of stone sculptures scattered all over the place bear witness to the iconoclastic fury of the Muslims. The present habitation stands on the ruins of ancient temples and buildings.

In the hey-day of its glory, during the Pratihāra period, it was adorned by beautiful temples and bathing *ghāts* where pilgrims thronged from all over India. A stone slab inscription of the reign of the Pratihāra Emperor, Mahendrapāla bears witness to this fact.<sup>2</sup>

From an inscription of the reign of the Pratihāra Emperor, Bhoja,<sup>3</sup> famous as Bhoja Ādivarāh, who ruled from c. 835 to 886, found at Pehowa and at present fixed into the wall of a *maṭha* known as Nāthon kā Derā, we learn that a big horse fair was held at Pehowa on the 14th day of the dark fortnight of the month of Chaitra every year. According to the account given in this inscription, horse-dealers from several countries came from far and near to transact business. It is a well-known fact that in ancient India, horses were imported from Vāhalīka, i.e., Bactria or the modern region of Balkh, from Kamboja, the present Pamir region, from Parsika, Persis of the Greek or modern Persia, as well as from Vanāyu, which has been indentified in the Śabdastomamahānidhi of T.N. Tarakvachaspati with Arabia. In Sanskrit literature, there are many references in the *Rāmāyana*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purānas* and *Raghuvamśa* of Kālidāsa to these imported horses.<sup>4</sup>

\*Department of History, D.A.V. College, Pehowa (Kurukshetra).

1. *Mahābhārata*, Vana, 83 ; *Bhāgavata*, X, 77 ; *Vāmana*, V. 58. 115.

2. *Epigraphia Indica*, I, 242.

3. *Ibid.*, 184.

4. c वनायुजाः पारसीकाः काम्बोजा वाह्लिका हयाः ।

[Continued on page 43]

It appears that the fine breed of horses, imported from these distant countries, were first brought to Pṛithūdaka where they were sold to prospective customers, both the government and private persons. The Pehowa Inscription tells us that the foremen of the dealers, who came from various countries, chief among whom were those mentioned above, granted to the sacred place of famous Pṛithūdaka, a charter to the following effect : “To the temple of the god installed by the illustrious Guhāditya, in the famous Kānyakubja, and to the god Viṣṇu installed by Bhūvaka, the son of Nāgara Bhatta Prabhākara, on the banks of the Ganges in famous Bhojapura near famous Kānyakubja, and to the god Yajñavarāḥ installed by the same Bhūvaka, in famous Pṛithūdaka near the Prāchī Sarasvatī, we have given on the sale of horses, mares, mules and other animals—in Pṛithūdaka in the case of a purchase by the king as well as in the case of a purchase by the Thakkurs (barons), the provincials and so forth, and in Traighaṭaka and other sacred places in the case of purchase by the king alone, for the sake of spiritual merit, two dirhams for each animal, as a perpetual endowment.”<sup>5</sup>

From the passage quoted above, the following facts emerge :

Firstly, Pṛithūdaka, modern Pehowa, was a big centre of horse trade where an annual fair was held for the sale of horses. In all probability, traders brought horses of fine breed from Arabia, Persia, Balkh and Pamirs for supply to other parts of India.

Secondly, the horse dealers had a permanent organisation, called Goshṭhī corresponding to a trade guild which had powers to regulate the trade including the levying of taxes for making permanent religious donations.

Thirdly, this sale tax was levied on the sale of animals to the king, to the government officials, the barons and the common people without any distinction so far as the transactions in Pṛithūdaka were concerned, whereas in the case of transactions made in Traighaṭaka and other sacred places, the sale tax was levied only on royal purchases.

Fourthly, the traders' organisations enjoyed wide powers to levy taxes for the benefit of the religious institutions and invest money in permanent trusts.

Fifthly, it appears that Pṛithūdaka, situated as it was in the northern

---

*Contd. from page 42]*

*Amarkośha*, II, 8, 45.

काम्बोज विषये जातं वह्नीकैश्च ह्योत्तमैः।

वनायुजैर्नदीजैश्च पूर्णं हरि ह्योत्तमैः ॥

*Ramāyana*, I, VI, 22.

5. *Epigraphia Indica*, 189-90,



most part of the Pratihāra empire, was most suited as an emporium for the trade in horses, the finest breed of which were imported from the north-western neighbouring countries.

Lastly, it has to be noted that the horse dealers created the benefactions not only for the temples existing at Prithūdaka but also for the benefit of the places of worship in distant Kānyakubja (Kannauj) and its vicinity. This was obviously done for two reasons. It was natural that the traders who, in all likelihood had dealings all over Northern India, had to show special regard for the temples situated in the imperial capital. Secondly, it is equally likely that atleast some of the members of this trade guild hailed from the imperial capital and its vicinity.

## An Interesting Clay Sealing from Sunet

Devendra Handa\*

Sunet, situated in Lat. 30° 55' North and Long. 75° 51' East, now a suburb of Ludhiana in the Punjab, is a well-known ancient site.<sup>1</sup> Being situated on an ancient high mound,<sup>2</sup> it is known as Uchcha Pind also. The present name, Sunet has been derived<sup>3</sup> from the ancient name Saunetra which is mentioned in Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*.<sup>4</sup> Sherds of Grey-Ware which bear close resemblance in type and fabric to the Painted-Grey-Ware sherds found from other sites in the region provide the evidence of the existence of Sunet in about the fifth century B.C.<sup>5</sup>

Sunet is famous as a mint site of the Kushanas and the Yaudheyas.<sup>6</sup> It has, however, yielded a large number of antiquities, the most noteworthy amongst which are the terracotta seals and sealings belonging generally to the Gupta period.<sup>7</sup> Earlier glyptics are not totally unknown.<sup>8</sup> Though antiques are being collected from the site for more than a century now, yet the most important collection has been made by Swami Omanand Sarasvati of Gurukula Jhajjar, Rohtak (Haryana).<sup>9</sup> Swamiji has published many of the seals and sealings from the site but

---

\*Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

1. *Punjab District Gazetteer, Ludhiana District, 1888-89*, pp. 19-20 ; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. I, p. 437.
2. Cunningham, Alexander, *Archaeological Survey Report*, Vol. XIV, pp. 65-67, 139-45 ; C.J. Rodgers, *Report of the Panjab Circle of the Archaeological Survey for 1888-89*, pp. 34-36.
3. *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. IV (1942), p. 47. (Hereafter cited as *J.N.S.I.*)
4. *Ashtadhyayi*, IV. 2.75.
5. *J.N.S.I.*, XXXII, p. 80.
6. Sahni, Birbal, *Current Science*, Vol. X, No. 2, March, 1941, pp. 65-67, Figs. 1-12 ; *The Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India* (Bombay, 1945), pp. 32-37, 61 ; Swami Omanand Sarasvati, *Ancient Mints of Haryana* (Jhajjar, V. S. 2036), pp. 83-90.
7. Prinsep, J., *Indian Antiquities*, Vol. I, Pl. IV ; *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1901, 98 f ; A. H. Dani, *Indian Palaeography*, p. 228, fig. 183 ; *J.N.S.I.* XIX, 71 ; XX, pp. 67-69 ; XXVII, pp. 98-99 ; XXI, pp. 30-31, 38 ; XXX, pp. 222-23 ; Swami Omanand Sarasvati, *Ancient Seals of Haryana* (Jhajjar, V. S. 2031) (Hereafter cited as *A.S.H.*) No. 80.
8. *A.S.H.*, Nos. 104, 168, 170, 189, etc.
9. *A.S.H.*, Nos. 80-272, 477.



his readings of the legends in some cases do not seem to be satisfactory<sup>10</sup> and in a few cases he has not been able to decipher the legends. In this paper, we take an example of the latter category and offer our decipherment.

Glyptics with Kharoshthi legends are very rare at Sunet though not totally unknown. Swamiji has described and illustrated a glyptic with the Kharoshthi legend *Jaya Pachalaya* (i. e., *Jaya Panchalaya*)<sup>11</sup> and another which according to him bears Kharoshthi legend which he could not decipher.<sup>12</sup>

The sealing in question (fig. 1) is round in shape and bears the central device of an animal which has been indentified as a lion by



Fig. 1

Swamiji.<sup>13</sup> The body and the long legs, of the animal, however do not resemble those of the lion's though the up curved tail does look leonine. The animal may be a composite one. In between the fore and hind legs of the animal is a fylfot (*swastika*). Above the animal is a small three letter legend regarded by Swamiji to be in the Kharoshthi script. The letters are very clear and they do not resemble the Kharoshthi letters. If, however, we turn the sealing upside down, these so-called

10. Swamiji himself was doubtful of some of his readings and has put them with a question mark, e.g., *A.S.H.*, Nos. 127, 133, 148, etc.

11. *Ibid.*, No. 189.

12. *Ibid.*, No. 135.

13. *Ibid.*



Fig. 2

Kharoshthi letters become Brahmi letters which can easily be deciphered as '*Chadasa*.'<sup>14</sup> Generally the legend is put over the device straight or around it, but here the legend seems to have been placed upside down for the reason best known to the carver. Palaeographically, the sealing may be placed in the second century B. C.

The Prakrit legend, *Chadasa* evidently stands for Sanskrit *Chandrasya*, i.e., of Chandra. There is no honorific 'Sir' or any other title. It is notable that early glyptics generally do not show the use of any honorifics or titles. The sealing thus may have belonged to a commoner known by the name of Chandra. The *Swastika* is an auspicious symbol and is often used on glyptics but what is the significance of the strange animal is only a matter of guess.<sup>15</sup>

14. Cf. *Chada* inscribed on a Mauryan Yakshi image.

15. Since many of the seals/sealings found at Sunet show the emblems corresponding to the names they bear (e.g., trident on the glyptics belonging to Mahesvara, Rudrasarma, Sthanu, etc., conch on those of Harisarma, Vishnudasa, Sanskha, etc.; discus being adopted by Krishnadatta, elephant by Indragupta, lion by Vyaghradatta, horse by Surya, crescent by Jayasoma, etc.). It may be surmised that the animal may have some correspondence with the name Chandra. It will be interesting to note in this connection that the vehicle of Chandra, the Moon, according to Hindu mythology, is a chariot driven by ten horses (Vishnu-dharmottara, III, 68). So his association with horse, like that of Surya, is logical. Chandra is regarded as the son of Budha (Mercury) whose vehicle is lion. Chandra with lion as his vehicle has actually been depicted on an early medieval temple at Osian (Rajasthan). The traditions of horse and lion as the vehicle of Chandra may have existed in ancient India and the artist here seems to have combined the two animals. It is to be noted that composite animals are sometimes found on early Indian coins also.



## Sunet—An Ancient Metropolis of Punjab

G. B. Sharma and Kuldip Singh\*

The village Sunet (Sunetra), also known as Ucha Pind, is situated at 30° 53' North and 75° 50' East. It lies about 6 kms. from Ludhiana and about one km. south of Ludhiana-Ferozepur Road. The present village is inhabited over an ancient mound. The mound was originally 1750 × 1200 sq. ft. in 1878-79, when General Alexander Cunningham visited the site.<sup>1</sup> Sunet was a large city in ancient times, perhaps a metropolis. The mound was devastated by brick robbers who removed large portions of debris and bricks for use as ballast for building Ludhiana-Ferozepur and Doraha-Ludhiana railway line. Even for raising the fort at Ludhiana, bricks from Sunet were used.

At present large portions of the mound have been parcelled out in the shape of plots by Ludhiana Municipal Corporation and many colonies, such as Aggar Nagar, Bhai Randhir Singh Nagar, are springing up. Only some portions of the mound on the south, seemingly a citadel, and some more areas here and there are extant.

On the basis of literary and archaeological sources, the antiquity of Sunet goes back to *Mahabharata* period.

This place has been referred as Sunetra, after the name of one of the three sons of Dharitrashtra, son of Janamejaya, in the Kuru dynastic list. This prince may have been remembered as the eponymous founder of the place which bore its name after him. Other instances of eponymous heroes, reputed as founders of cities or Janapadas, are also found in old literature.

On the basis of coin-moulds of Yaudheyas acquired from Sunet, Dr Birbal Sahni published an article which was gone through by V. S. Agrawal, who instead consulted the geographical lists of Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* and found the old name of Sunet as Sunetra. Cunningham, the then Director General of Archaeological Survey of India, visited the site of Sunet and collected 1000 coins of different varieties. Among them was one coin of the Greek King, Hermaeus, 269 coins of the

\*Department of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museum and Archives, Punjab, Chandigarh.

1. Cunningham, *ASR*, Vol. XIV, p. 66. Also, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XXIII, p. 146.

earlier Indo-Scythians, 132 of the later Indo-Scythians, one Gupta coin, 126 of Indo-Sassanian period, two other coins of Amoghbbhuti and Uttama-datta, 17 coins of Vyaghra, 20 specimen of Samanta Deva and only one of Mohammadan were also picked up.

A large number of important seals, sealings, coins and other miscellaneous antiquities have been collected from the site by various agencies. These seals and sealings, coins and coin-moulds belong mainly to Yaudheyas and some to Vṛishṇis. A large number of seals with religious mottoes have also been discovered. Some of them are having the following legend :

(i) *Jitam Bhagvata Swami Naryanain.* (ii) *Shankar Naryanabhyam.* (iii) *Datauya Bhouktevya.* (iv) *Dharam Kartavya.* (v) *Yaudhenam Ji Mantra Diaranam.* (vi) *Vṛisṇi Rajnya Gana Puskritsya Mahanenaptervasunridh putrasya Jayasonṁsya Kendrasthrasya,* (vii) *Sidhan Jaya Pansa Nayakanam.*

Some seals and sealings discovered from Sunet with legend *Datvyam Bhotavyam* are similar to the ones discovered from OC-EO (Kampuchea) and it clearly establishes contact with Punjab even in ancient times with areas beyond the frontiers of India during 4-5th century A.D.

Sunet was the headquarter of Yaudheyas and was also their mint-town. Thousands of coin-moulds of this brave tribal republic with the legend, 'Yaudheya Ganasya Jaya' have been discovered. These coins were issued as commemoration of their victory over Kushānas.

Sunet has provided such rare coins of Audumbaras, Yaudheyas and Vṛishṇis, the like of which have never been discovered elsewhere in India. Coins, depicting the earliest form of temple architecture is one of them.

The Department of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology and Museum, is shortly undertaking the excavations of the extant portions of the mound of Sunet with a view to bring to light more information about the socio-cultural life of early historic period of ancient Punjab and also try to establish relationship of Yaudheyas with Kushānas.

A brief description of Yaudheyas will not be out of place. The forms Yodheya and Yaudheya are derived from Yodha and signify 'a warrior.'<sup>2</sup> The Yaudheyas claimed descent from Yaudheya, a son of Yudhishtira by his wife Deviki, daughter of Govasana of the Saibya tribe.<sup>3</sup>

The Yaudheyas, as their name signifies, were noted for their martial qualities. They are mentioned along with the Trigartas and

2. *AIU*, p. 165.

3. *ASK*, p. 140.



others amongst the *Ayudhajivin sanghas* in Panini and the commentary.<sup>4</sup> In the *Mahabharata*, they appear together with the other known Punjab tribes, viz. the Ambashthas, Madrakas and Trigartas as well as the Malavas and Sibis<sup>5</sup> who were probably then dwelling in the Punjab. According to the *Harivamsha* and other *Puranas*, they descended from Uṣinara.<sup>6</sup> Alexander's historians mention a great republican territory on the Beas which was "exceedingly fertile and the inhabitants were good agriculturists, brave in war and living under an excellent system of internal government; for the multitude was governed by the aristocracy, who exercised their authority with justice and moderation."<sup>7</sup> Jayaswal identifies this unnamed state with the Yaudheya republic on the evidence of the find-spots of the Yaudheya coins.<sup>8</sup> Varahamihira puts them in the northern division of India along with the Rajanyas, Trigartas, Arjunāyanas and other peoples of the north.<sup>9</sup>

Cunningham identifies the Yaudheyas with the modern Johiyas who occupy both banks of the Sutlej along with the Bahawalpur frontier, called Johiya-bar after them, and believes that Mount Judh of the Salt Range may have derived its name from them. He also thinks that in ancient times their territory must have extended much farther to the north and east, as their coins are found in the eastern Punjab, and all over the country between the Sutlej and the Jamuna rivers.<sup>10</sup> Two large hoards of Yaudheya coins were discovered at Sonapat, between Delhi and Karnal.<sup>11</sup> Behat, an ancient site near Saharanpur, yielded large number of their coins along with some Kuninda pieces.<sup>12</sup> A hoard of 164 Yaudheya coins were discovered in 1936 in the Dehra Dun district.<sup>13</sup> Yaudheya coin-moulds were found at the Khokra-kot mound in Rohtak and at Sunet in Ludhiana, which mark two great mint-sites of the Yaudheyas.<sup>14</sup> Many other finds are also recorded.<sup>15</sup>

4. Panini, V. 3. 116-17 and IV. 178; cf *British Museum. Coins* (Hereafter cited as BMC), p. cxxix, notes 3 and 4 and HP, Part I, p. 35, notes 2 and 4.

5. Cf. *Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society*, Bangalore (Hereafter cited as QJMS), XXV, p. 114.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Arrian, Bk.V. 25. Cf. HP, Part I. p. 66, p. 67, n. 1.

8. HP, Part I, p. 67.

9. *Brihatsamhita*, XIV. 28 and XVI. 22, Kern's ed., pp. 92, 103.

10. *ASR*, XIV, p. 140 and *Chronology of Ancient India*, pp. 75-76.

11. *CAI*, p. 76. For another hoard from Sonpath, see, *JNSI*, XXIV, p. 138.

12. *JASB* 1834, Pl. XVIII; *ibid.*, 1835, Pl., XXXIV; *Prinsep's Essays* Pls. IV. and XIV.

13. *JBPRS*, XXIII, pp. 148-49; *JASI*. 11, 109 ff.

14. *JASB* 1884, 137 ff.; *Current Science*, 1936, 796 ff.; *ibid.*, 1941 65 f. For another big hoard from Jaijaivanti near Rohtak see, *JNSI*, XXIV, p. 138.

15. See, *BMC* (AI), p. cli.

This includes a hoard of five thousand coins from Sonapat as reported by Dr Tilak Ram.

The evidence of the provenance of coins regarding the location of the Yaudheyas is supported by epigraphical sources. The Junagarh Inscription of Rudradaman, refers to the military power of the Yaudheyas and their encounter with the great Saka Satrap, Rudradaman<sup>16</sup>—the Bijaygarh Inscription of Maharaja Mahasenapati who was elected leader of Yaudheya republic<sup>17</sup> and the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta refer to the Yaudheyas as one of the frontier tribes, in association with the Malvas and the Arjunāynas.<sup>18</sup>

The literary references to the Yaudheyas testify to the existence of the tribe as early as the fifth century B. C. (the time of Panini). Their political career, however, seems to have been about the later half of the second century B.C. after the rule of Menander in the eastern Punjab, when the first period of their history begins. The legend of the earliest Yaudheya coins indicates that the Yaudheya republic had its headquarters at Bahudhanyaka during that time. In the *Mahabharata*, the country of Rohitaka is divided into Maru and Bahudhanyaka, the latter of which is also mentioned as a territory conquered by Nakula in the west<sup>19</sup>. Bahudhanyaka signifies 'rich in corn' and as it is contrasted with Maru, it appears to be the name of an unusually fertile part of the Punjab in the possession of the Yaudheyas and may be located at Rohtak where the coin-moulds of the Bahudhanyaka mint were found. The Yaudheya territory of this period seems also to have included Behat in Saharanpur where has been found a large number of coins of this class. The absence of the name Bahudhanyaka on the coin from Baghaura in the Gurgaon district and on the square piece of coin V shows that there were probably other mints of the Yaudheyas apart from Bahudhanyaka. We may conclude then that the Yaudheyas in the second and first centuries B.C. occupied the southern portion of the Punjab, comprising Gurgaon, Rohtak and Karnal, and also the adjoining territories including Saharanpur.

The second stage of their history begins with the advent of the Kushanas in the first century A.D. as it was a period of hard struggle with the foreigners. Since the vast tract of land lying from Kabul in the north-west to Banaras in the east lay under Kushāna suzerainty during the reign of Kanishka I, it is highly probable that the Yaudhe-

16. *SI*, p. 172, l. 12.

17. *Ind. Ant.* XIV, p. 8.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. clii-iii.

19. Cf. *JBORS*, XXII, 95 ff.



yas (whose territory lay in the eastern Punjab) had to obey the supremacy of the Kushānas, at least of Kanishka.

Whatever might have been the position of the Yaudheyas during the early Kushāna rule, they soon appear to have emerged as a mighty power, and by the middle of the second century A.D., we see them fighting with the great Saka Satrap, Rudradaman who describes them as 'loath to submit,' rendered proud as they were by having manifested their title of heroes among all Kshatriyas.<sup>20</sup> This shows that the Yaudheyas survived the onslaughts of the Kushānas, and grew in power so much so that they were regarded as the best of the Kshatriyas in the second century A.D.

That the Yaudheyas were in possession of their ancient stronghold of Rohtak at least upto the second century A.D. is suggested by archaeological evidence. For, an examination of some surface-finds by K.N. Dikshit indicated that Khokra-kot (Rohtak) was in occupation upto the Kushana period when it was partially abandoned, only the southern part where Rohtak now stands, remained populated.<sup>21</sup> Thus, a large portion of northern Rajasthan, the eastern Punjab and the adjoining areas of U.P., i.e. the vast tract extending from Bahawalpur to Bijaygarh in Bharatpur district, including Rohtak and Saharanpur, probably lay under the Yaudheya republic in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Brahmanyadeva or Karttikeya 'the presiding deity of Heroism and War', seems to have had a special appeal to the warlike tribe of the Yaudheyas. And Rohitaka (i.e. Rohtak) was the specially favoured residence of god Karttikeya, according to the *Mahabharata* which calls its people Mattamayurakas, apparently identical with the Yaudheyas of Bahudhanyaka (modern Rohtak).<sup>22</sup>

Their southward expansion having received a severe setback at the success of Rudrdaman, the Yaudheyas probably retired in the north in the hilly regions of the Himalayas, as indicated from the Dehra Dun hoard of 164 copper coins of this period bearing the name of Brahmanyadeva. To the north they became the southern neighbours of the Kunindas of the Beas valley and the Garhwal district.

Their head-quarters at this period appear to be at Sunet near

20. Sarvva-kshatra-avishkrita-vira-sabda-jat-otsek-avidhe-yanath Yaudheyam: see, *SI*, p. 172, ll. 11-12 and *EI*, VIII; p. 44.

21. That Rohtak continued to be the stronghold of the Yaudheyas even in the third-fourth centuries is suggested by two large finds of Yaudheya coins of Class VI with the legend *Yaudheya-garasya jayali* from Sonpath near Rohtak; Cf. *JNSI*, XXIV, p. 223.

22. Cf. *ICCAI*, pp. 14-15.

Ludhiana, For A. F. R. Hoernle discovered 'in and near the village of Sonait' (i.e. Sunet) three negative clay-seals or moulds for the Yaudheya coins of the post-Kushana period and one very large clay-seal with the inscription-*Yaudheyānam jaya-mamtra-dharanam* (the votive tablet) of the Yaudheyas who know how to devise victory in characters of about the third century A.D.<sup>23</sup> After Hoernle's discovery, 38 coin-moulds of the same nature were found at Sunet.<sup>24</sup> Soon afterwards, another 41 moulds of identical description, and also coming from Sunet, were received by the Indian Museum.<sup>25</sup> Thousands of coin-moulds have been discovered now and their mint site has been located at Sunet. It is apparent, therefore, that just as Rohtak was the mint-town for the Yaudheyas of Bahudhanyaka, Sunet marks the site of another mint-town of the Yaudheyas of a later period. And, as these moulds are for coins generally assigned to the third and fourth centuries A. D., Sunet was probably the headquarters of the Yaudheyas at that time.

The re-assertion of the powers of the Yaudheyas after hard struggle with the foreigners, viz., the Sakas and the Kushānas, greatly increased their prestige in the post-Kushāna period. Already regarded as the best of the Kshatriyas, they were now believed to be in possession of a 'victory-charm', as implied by the above mentioned clay-seal from Sunet, bearing the legend; *Yaudheyānam Jaya-mamtra-dharanam*. The legend of the Yaudheya coins of the post-Kushāna period also proclaims the victory of their republic, *Yaudheya-ganasya jayah*.<sup>26</sup> That these coins replaced the Kushāna issues and were current in the same districts is suggested by the distinct Kushāna influence on their style, type and metrology. The figure of Karttikeya, the presiding deity of the Yaudheyas, again, occupies the obverse of these coins.

Cunningham observes that the Yaudheyas were a powerful nation, without any king, but under the command of three military leaders which suggests the probability that they were divided into 'three tribes', each led by its own chief.<sup>27</sup> The present-day Johiyas are also divided

23. *PASB*, 1884, 137 ff, Jai Prakash, however, thinks that *mamtra-dhara* refers to the 'mantriparishad', and interprets the legend as "(seal) of the upholders of the 'mamtra' (or the secret) of victory of the Yaudheyas" *JNSI*, XXVII, p. 13.

24. *Current Science*, 1941, p. 65 f.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

26. Jai Prakash also interprets the legend *Yaudheya-ganasya jayah* in a different way. According to him, it does not proclaim the victory of the Yaudheyas republic, but is simply a benedictory formula signifying 'Let the Yaudheya be victorious' *JNSI*, XXVII, p. 136.

27. *ASR*, XIV, p. 142



into three, viz., Langavire (Lakvira), Madhovire (Madhera) and Adamvira (Admera).<sup>28</sup> The similarity of the name Adamvira with Audumbara tempts us to identify the Adamviras with the ancient Audumbaras, the northern neighbours of the Yaudheyas.

If we accept this identification, we have to assume that the Audumbaras [whose coinage of the post-Kushāna period is not known, might have coalesced with the Yaudheyas, and thus, were one of the three sections of the Yaudheya confederation, referred to in the coin-legends. The other two sections cannot, however, be identified.

Again, Altekar holds that the Yaudheyas received valuable support and co-operation in their fight for independence from two other tribes, viz. the Kunindas and the Arjunāyanas respectively who lived to the north-east and the south-east of their territory, and who regained independence in the post-Kushāna period along with the Yaudheyas. As Kuninda coins later than the third century A. D. and Arjunāyana coins of the post-Kushāna period are not known, Altekar thinks that these two tribal states merged with the Yaudheya gana which, thus, became a confederation of three republics. If this suggestion is accepted, the words *dvi* and *tri* on the Yaudheya coins would appear to refer to the Arjunāyanas and the Kunindas, as the second and third members of the Yaudheya confederacy.<sup>29</sup> The Kunindas, whose coins of the second or third century A. D. are known, seem to have regained their independence in the post-Kushāna period as a separate political entity. It is, therefore, not likely that later on they merged with the Yaudheyas of their own accord. On the contrary, they might have been overpowered and their territory annexed by their more powerful neighbours, the Yaudheyas. This may account for the absence of their coins for the period later than the third century A.D., as well as for the fact that they are not mentioned amongst the north-western frontier tribes in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta. Again, the mention of the Arjunāyanas, side by side with the Yaudheyas in the same inscription, indicates that the Arjunāyanas did not lose their political independence to the Yaudheyas. We do not know why the Arjunāyanas did strike coins during this period. It may be pointed out that the Madras and many other tribes who are also mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription are not known to have issued any coin at all.

On the basis of find-spots of their coins, it has been held that the Yaudheyas were the largest republican tribe in ancient India and that

28. *AIU* p. 167.

29. *JUPHS*, XVI, pp. 55-56.

they were largely responsible for the downfall of the Kushāna empire.<sup>30</sup> But this view may be partially true, for, from the above survey of the Yaudheya history, we have seen that the Yaudheyas did not possess the wide region, suggested by the provenance of their coins and inscriptions at one and the same time. Again, the decline and downfall of a vast empire like that of the Kushānas must have had some internal causes and cannot be ascribed mainly to a single outside agency like Yaudheyas.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, it is natural to think that the Yaudheyas, like many other contemporary tribes, took advantage of the internal weakness of the Kushāna empire, and hastened the process of its disintegration by re-asserting their power.

The Allahabad Pillar Inscription shows that the Yaudheyas enjoyed their regained independence at least upto the time of Samudragupta, and retained their possession in the territory between the Sutlej and the Jumna to the north of the dominions of the Malavas and the Arjunāyanas on the western border of the Gupta empire.

The inscription also informs us that the Yaudheyas along with the other tribes became tributary to the Gupta empire, probably indicating thereby that they did not lose their internal autonomy. They might have continued their existence as a semi-independent power down to the middle of the fifth century A.D., when they appear to have been 'engulfed in the Huna avalanche'. A later reference to the Yaudheyas is made in the *Brihatsamhita*, a work of the sixth century A.D.

The Puranas, however, ascribe a monarchical constitution to the Yaudheyas.<sup>32</sup> On the face of it, the Puranic statement is contrary to the tradition about the Yaudheya constitution. But it is possible, as suggested by Jayaswal, that the Puranas have here referred to the origin of the Yaudheyas when they had probably a monarchical form of government.<sup>33</sup> During the historical period, however, we see them as a republican tribe. According to Allan, a coin of Yaudheyas with the legend Maharaja shows that the Yaudheyas had a monarchical constitution until a fairly late date.<sup>34</sup> But the occurrence of the word

30. Cf. Altekar, *JUPHS*, XVI, p. 52.

31. Cf. *AIU*, p. 168 and n.l.

32. Cf. *HP*, Part I, p. 74.

33. *Ibid.*

34. Cf. *Yaudheya-gana-purashkritasya maharaja-mahasenapateh*, etc., CII, II, 252. ff. As we shall see below, some of the other contemporary tribal chiefs of the Punjab, viz. those of the Audumbaras, Kulutas, Kunindas and Vaimakis also followed the practice of assuming royal titles. It is interesting to note that the

[Continued on page 56]



Maharaja on it may not signify what Allan has supposed. For, on the evidence of the Bijaygarh Inscription, we know that even the 'elected leader of the Yaudheya gana' was called a Maharaja. That the Yaudheyas had a republican form of government is sufficiently corroborated by the expression *gana* occurring in the above mentioned inscription as well as in the legend of their coins of the post-Kushāna period, which reads *Yaudheya-ganasya jayh*.

---

*Contd. from page 55]*

Yaudheya chief referred to in the Bijayagarh Inscription is not only a Maharaja but also a Mahasenapati, probably indicating thereby the military character of the Yaudheya constitution, which seems to have combined the characteristics of the *samghas* termed as *ayudhajivin* in Panini and as *sastropajivin* by Kautilya, as well as those of the *rajasabd-opajivin* republics of Kautilya.

## Presidential Address

Medieval Section

S. B. P. Nigam\*

Mr President, sectional presidents, ladies and gentlemen :

I find it difficult to choose appropriate words to express my profound sense of gratitude to the organisers of the Punjab History Conference who have kindly invited me to preside over the medieval section. I feel a little embarrassed as I have hardly any significant contribution to my credit except for a few chapters of volume fourth of *History of Punjab* which were allotted to me by the late Professor Fauja Singh of revered memory. However, since the course of my studies at Kurukshetra University, I have been in constant touch with the sources of history of the Punjab of the medieval period which emboldened me to accept the invitation. This year's theme being Urbanisation with special reference to trade and commerce, I thought it proper to present a few facts and reflections on the Punjab during the Sultanate period.

The Punjab has always had the unique advantage of capturing the place of pride in Indian History because it has been under the full light of history in comparison to other regions of the subcontinent. It has been the cradle of many civilisations like the Indus and the Aryan, besides many of lesser light. In the *Mahabharata*, it is called the *Samant Panchak Chhetra* where many decisive battles were fought. Its early contact with the Greeks, Sakas, Scythians and the Chinese brought it into more lime light to west Asia. Economically, it was rich enough to attract the attention of the foreign traders. Above all, it was definitely familiar with the technological changes that took place in central and west Asian countries, as it was permanently associated with these countries so far as trade and commerce was concerned.

Chronologically, no region can boast of a recorded history, beginning, of course, with the Greek invasion, than the Punjab. Today it is difficult to identify cities and places of the Punjab mentioned by the Greek historians of Alexander but they speak a lot about its social

---

\*Chairman, Department of History, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.



and economic life. Again, no region is better placed than the Punjab, so far as periodisation of its history is concerned. The medieval period differs from region to region. The learned editors of *The History and Culture of the Indian People* begin the medieval period of northern India with the Ghori conquest and the Deccan with the Devagiri Expedition of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji. But in so doing they appear to have completely ignored the Punjab which not only withstood the Arab and Turkish invasions but also served as a safety valve for the vast regions lying to the east and south of the Ravi. Thus, for the Punjab, we may appropriately start the medieval period with the Arab invasion of Sindh in 711 A.D. when a new civilisation, destined to mould the future life of the subcontinent with new institutions, established itself in Sindh.

The vast kingdom of Sindh at the beginning of the eighth century A.D. stretched from the foot of the hills of Kashmir to the Arabian Sea and comprised the whole of the Punjab except the independent kingdom of Kashmir and eastern Punjab, comprising Haryana and Himachal Pradesh upto the banks of the Yamuna.

The *Chachnama* tells us that it was a densely populated country with numerous forts and capital cities. Alwar, the capital of the kingdom, 'was a town adorned with various kinds of royal buildings, villas, gardens, fountains, streams, meadows and trees and was situated on the banks of the river Mehran (Sind)'. The kingdom was divided into four provinces with Brahmanabad, Siwistan, Iskandah and Multan as capital cities. Raori was another city where the royal army was kept ready to meet any challenge. The *Chachnama* gives some idea about the population of these cities. The border town of Kikanan falling in the province of Siwistan had a garrison of 20,000 soldiers in 660 A.D. It was enough to repulse the Arab army sent by Amir Muaviya under the leadership of Abdullah bin Sawad. Debal, the principal port town, mainly populated by traders and artisans, had a garrison of 4,000 but was very rich emporia of precious metals and jewels. The city of Rawar had a garrison of 20,000 and when it fell to the invaders after the defeat of Dahar in 711 A.D., the slaves captured by the invaders alone counted 60,000. Brahmanabad, another capital city, had a garrison of 40,000 and 20,000 slaves. It was mainly inhabited by merchants and artisans. A census was ordered after its fall and 1000 merchants were singled out for ransom. No statistics are given about Alwar, the capital city, which was the biggest town in the whole of Sindh. It surrendered without fighting. The next and the last great city to fall was Multan, which was also a place of pilgrimage. The garrison, comprising 10,000

soldiers, was killed. The city paid a ransom of 60,000 *dirhams* (silver coins). The main idol weighted 230 *maunds* of gold. Here a large treasure containing 1320 *maunds* of gold fell into the hands of the victors. The city and the country subject to it yielded so much revenue that it could maintain a garrison of 50,000 soldiers which now formed the main army of the invaders.

The baffled historian wonders as to how such a rich country with so vast a militia succumbed to the invasion of 6,000 cavalymen led by an unchiselled youth of seventeen summers. Complacency, the end-product of affluence, is the answer.

Although the above figures do not give an exact idea of the population of these cities but still these indicate great economic activity and prosperity alround. The later history of the Arab rule in Sindh has been preserved in the works of al-Biladhuri, al-Suyuti and al-Yaqubi and others but these sources hardly mention anything worth consideration except names of governors and their role as administrators. But the economic drain caused by the Arab conquest can be imagined from the fact that the governor Junaid bin Abdul Rahman al Marri sent eight crore *dirhams* as tribute to the Khalifa Hisham bin Abdul Malik (105-125 A. H.).

Although the historical texts are silent about the economic data of the period but the deficiency is made good by the Arab geographers who supply valuable statistics. *Al-masalik-wal-mamalik* of Abdullah Khurdadbeh gives the names of all principal towns of Sindh and also their distances from each other. Land and sea routes to Sindh from Baghdad are mentioned in detail, as also the products imported into Persia from Sindh. The *Kitab-ul-Buldan* mentions a few cities of Sindh and its main products. The *Ajaib-ul-Hind* gives an account of trade between Kashmir and the Punjab which was mainly done by river navigation. The *Muruj-az-zahab* gives a more detailed account of Sindh and Kashmir. Alwar had lost all importance as capital of Sindh which was now governed from Multan, a very large and populous city. The *Masalik-ul-Mamalik* of Istakhri gives a detailed account of Sindh and its principal towns. Its main agricultural produce comprised of dates, sugarcane, grapes, besides a large variety of consumer goods. He says that Brahmanbad (al-Mansura) was a predominantly Muslim town. The *Ahsan-ut-taqasim* is a mine of information on social and economic life of Sindh. The *Hudud-i-Alam* tells us that Jalandhar was a town famous for its textiles but Waihind was the political and economic nucleus of the region on account of its riches.

Three centuries intervene between the Arab conquest of Sindh and



the fall of the next avalanche in the form of the Ghaznavid invasions. During this period the demographic and political map of the Punjab underwent great changes. The Arab rule in Sindh was supplanted by the Carmatians who ruled from Multan. In the rest of northern Punjab the Hindushahi kings held sway with their capital at Waihind. In the east, Thanesar had emerged as the seat of a vast kingdom. Besides Waihind and Jalandhar, we find more populous towns emerging obviously due to the growth of population as well as to the increasing economic activity throughout the region. Lahore and Thatta which were absolutely unknown in the eighth century were now capital cities handling vast cargo to the west and central Asian countries.

India's contact with the western world, established by the Arabs, was paying rich dividends but we find its wealth concentrated more in the temples than in state treasuries. No wonder, therefore, that Mahmud directed his attacks on towns of religious importance. The destruction wrought by him was thorough and far-reaching. Al-Beruni aptly remarks, "Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country and performed there wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people". He says that there was a large-scale migration of vast population from the Punjab and Sindh to neighbouring and far off places like Kashmir, Benaras and the like where Mahmud's arms could not reach.

In economic terms, the loss was incalculable. Apart from the drainage of the country's wealth, the Ghaznavid invasions so completely ruined the trade and commerce that the centre of economic activity shifted to Gujarat and the Deccan which now developed great ports.

In chapter XVIII of the *Tahqiq-i-Maalil-i-Hind*, Al-Beruni gives very valuable and first-hand knowledge of the geography of the Punjab and its principal towns. The southern-most boundary of the Ghaznavid empire extended upto Sonapat and Nagarkot formed the eastern boundary. Al-Beruni's geography of Kashmir is faithful, though he never visited it.

The loss of population during the Ghaznavid invasions, which spread over a quarter of a century, was colossal. The following estimate drawn by Professor K. S. Lal from contemporary sources gives some idea of the great holocaust in the Punjab :

## Loss of Population in the Punjab during Mahmud's invasions

Sr. No.	Region	Killed	POW/Captured Slaves
1.	Frontier towns	Not known	Not known
2.	Peshawar	15,000	5,00,000
3.	Waihind	15,000	Not known
4.	Bhera	Not known	Not known
5.	Multan	2,00,000	Not known
6.	Waihind to Nagarkot	33,000	Not known
7.	Tarain	10,000	Not known
8.	Kashmir	Not known	Large number
9.	Thanesar	Large number	2,00,000
10.	Lohkot	Not known	Not known
11.	Sindh	Large number	Large number
		2,73,000	7,00,000

These figures are only in respect of major campaigns. No figures are available for minor campaigns against border towns and refractory Hindu zamindars whose number was a legion. Besides a large number must have been killed due to starvation and pestilence.

The cities of Alwar, Brahmanabad and Waihind completely vanished from the scene so that we find them scarcely mentioned in subsequent literature. Peshawar was only an emaciated shadow of its immediate past and Thanesar was reduced to a phantom. But Lahore emerges as the seat of government and the cities of Kaithal, Panipat, Sonapat, Bhatinda and Jalandhar gain more importance.

During the reign of the successors of Mahmud, Tomar Rajputs emerged as a powerful force in eastern Punjab and Haryana with their capital at Delhi which was founded about the year 1152 A.D. They ousted the Turks from Nagarkot and Thanesar and pushed them back to the western bank of the Ravi but made no attempt to cross the river and wind up the moribund Ghaznavid empire. The Ghorids were destined to give the final blow to it but were not a formidable threat to the Rajputs. Their leader, Muizz-ud-Din Muhammad bin Sam, was completely routed in two famous battles of Abu and Tarain by the Baghelas of Gujarat and the Chauhans of Ajmer respectively but none attempted to secure the western border with the result that the Ghorids not only succeeded in consolidating their rule over the entire Punjab but also extended it upto the banks of the Yamuna. In the years that followed the Battle of Tarain, the whole of northern India succumbed to their invasion as if it had hardly any defence. We have



hardly any economic data of the Punjab for the century following the Ghorid invasion but new cities had been founded by Tomars in eastern Punjab. Samana and Kohram were seats of large *iqtas* (form of Jagirs), and other large towns mentioned in the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* are Taraori, Kaithal, Narnaul, Rohtak, Palwal, Panipat, Payal and Barwala.

The sources for the period of the early Turks are silent about economic activity but one fact has to be kept in mind that there was a basic difference between earlier invasions led by the Arabs and the Ghaznavids and the Turkish invasions of the twelfth century. The early Turks put a full-stop to economic drainage of the wealth of India. They regarded the new acquisition as their homeland. If they demolished temples or looted the wealth buried in Rajput forts, where it was lying dormant, they did a great service to the common man, as this wealth was brought into circulation once again in the money market and led to general prosperity. The abnormal rise in prices of essential commodities during the reign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji is a clear indication that there was more coined money in the market, so much so that the Sultan had to enforce price control. The abnormally high rate of interest which oscillated from 10 to 20 per cent prevailing in Delhi, indicated by Amir Khusrau, is a further proof of the fact that there was greater prosperity and consequent rise in the paying capacity of the people of average means.

The Punjab suffered most from the Turkish and the Mongol invasions. Foreign trade by land was almost nil but internal trade continued to flourish, in spite of general insecurity, and administrative centres like Multan and Lahore served as big clearing houses for the whole region. Grain traders were mostly Multanis. After 1310 A.D. when the Mongol raids completely stopped, the ancient trade route through Multan, Quetta and Khyber Pass was resumed and Multan and Lahore once again developed into rich markets for all sorts of goods for import and export. The main item for import was the horse from Turkestan. On entry into Sindh, each horse was taxed at the rate of seven *tankahs* and further duty had to be paid in Multan.

We can safely conclude that besides marketing of agricultural produce, industries based on agriculture flourished depending upon administrative security which differed from region to region. The Ghorid conquest of the Punjab was followed by the Mongol invasions which disturbed the peace of the Punjab during the thirteenth century. Their raids were an annual affair. Migration of large scale population from Iran, Turkestan and Afghanistan affected the economy to such an extent that foreign trade shifted to Gujrat and the Deccan. But

the Turks successfully defended the western border by maintaining strong garrisons in Multan and Lahore and other principal towns like Dipalpur, Samana, Kohram and Rohtak. As a result of vigorous and consistent military policy of Ala-ud-Din Khalji, the Punjab enjoyed peace till the end of the fourteenth century.

The merchandise was generally carried on by sea routes. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, we learn from Ibn-i-Battutah that Ormuz was the entrepot of the trade of Hind and Sindh. In Sindh, Lahri Bander was a great sea port and yielded an annual revenue of sixty lakhs of *tankahs*. Similarly, travellers who entered the city of Multan paid *Zakat* and *Ushr* taxes which yielded a heavy revenue to the state. Ibn-i-Battutah also gives a detailed account of the agricultural crops of the Punjab and says that the best variety of rice was grown in Sirsa. Contemporary accounts of the Punjab are silent on its economic condition but the *Masalik-ul-Absar F Mamalik-ul-Amsar* of Shihab-ud-Din-a!-Umri has preserved some valuable account. It says that the entire territory of the Punjab was divided into ten provinces, viz. Delhi, Multan, Kohram, Samana, Siwistan, Uchch, Hansi, Sirsa, Lahore and Kalanaur. Besides, it is the only source which has preserved a detailed account of the coinage, weights and measures of the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq which helps us in calculating some valuable economic data. The prices of consumer goods are also mentioned and it goes on to add that in the province of Delhi one *jital* was enough to feed three people at a time.

*Tarikh-i-Firozshahi* of Afif has preserved valuable data on urbanisation in the Punjab about the reign of Sultan Firozshah Tughluq. The cities of Hissar Firoza and Fatehabad were founded in 1354 A.D. There being great scarcity of water in this area, the Sultan ordered two canals to be dug, both originating near Karnal. Nearly all the irrigation projects of the Sultan were confined to eastern Punjab and many insignificant villages like Ambala, Karnal, Agroha etc. grew up into big towns. Firozpur was founded by the Sultan in 1361 A.D.

The *Insha-i-Mahru* of Malik Ain-ul-Mulk Multani, the governor of Multan under Firozshah Tughluq, gives valuable details about trade and commerce in the Punjab. It says that black-marketing in essential commodities was wide spread. Sugar was very cheap in Lahore and Delhi but in Multan it was sold at double the rates. Similar was the case with textiles of all varieties, ghee and fuel-wood. The author suggests state production and distribution as the only remedy to combat black-marketing. Again, it is the only source which says that agricultural labour near Multan was paid one *tankah* per month as wages.



There was complete chaos in the Delhi Sultanate after the death of Firoz Tughluq and provincial governors in Gujarat, Malwa, Jaunpur, Multan and Lahore became independent. At one time the authority of the Sultan was confined within the four walls of the capital and the people sarcastically remarked :

*Hukm-i-Khudawand-i-Alam*  
*Az Delhi ta Palam.*

This was followed by the Timurid invasion which ruined the country upto Delhi. We have only political history in contemporary chronicles. The Mughal invasion caused incalculable loss to trade, commerce and agriculture throughout the Punjab. For the Lodis also we have very scant information though they succeeded in rehabilitating civic life as they firmly established themselves till the invasion of Babar.

The above account is a very brief survey of trade and commerce in the Punjab during the Sultanate period. I have deliberately avoided making any significant reference to Kashmir because it was an independent kingdom and requires a separate treatment.

Before I wind up the address, I would beg all of you to forgive me if I have offended your feelings in any way. The historian is often a hateful figure in any age because he puts embarrassing questions, assigns unpalatable reasons, attributes incriminating motives and demands all sorts of explanations from people, living or dead. His condemnation is often lethal. But the stark realities of life brought out by him provide true guidelines for posterity.

## Guru Nanak's Approach to Religion

Gurbachan Singh Nayyar\*

Guru Nanak Dev, a doyen of Bhakti Movement, undertook extensive journeys in India and abroad lasting for a quarter of a century, administering healing touch to sick mankind. Religion was a way of life with him and he believed in the integration of human beings. He made his appearance when castes, creeds and disunity caused by diversity of beliefs had become articles of faith with the Indian society. Guru Nanak attempted to bring about order in this chaos. He was mainly concerned with achieving salvation. His denunciation of contemporary society was intimately connected with his ideas of attaining liberation of the soul from transmigration. For him, worldly pursuits were just means to an end. He condemned outrightly some of the prevailing customs and institutions because they were a hindrance in his religious mission.

Guru Nanak considered caste system quite absurd for wider spiritual aims, as it made a distinction between man and man. His attitude towards caste is depicted in several places in his compositions. We can have an exact idea of his views towards it. The Guru says :

Vain is the pride of caste

Vain is the pride of glory

The Lord alone gives shade to all.<sup>1</sup>

Guru Nank exhorted people to discard castes and have faith in God :

See thou of each the light within and ask not his caste<sup>2</sup>

For, hereafter the caste is of no avail.

While castigating the caste system, he said :

What merit is in caste

Know thou the Truth within.<sup>3</sup>

\*Head, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. *Adi Granth*, Sri Rag, Mahalla 1, p. 83. For most of the translation of the *Granth* used in this paper see, Gopal Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, in iv vols. (Delhi, 1960).

2. *Ibid.*, Asa, Mahalla 1, p. 349.

3. *Ibid.*, Majh, Mahalla 1, p. 142.



The Guru further remarked :

The God mindeth not our caste or birth  
so one must find the House of Truth:  
For as be one's deeds  
so be one's caste.<sup>4</sup>

Guru Nanak defined a *Kshatriya* thus :

He alone is a *Kshatriya* who is a Hero in Deed  
And dedicates his body to Compassion and Charity<sup>5</sup>.

Guru Nanak enunciated logical and simple essentials for the attainment of self-realisation and used a pragmatic and practical approach to propagate his injunction through travels known as *udasis*, which he commenced in 1496. As a result of these tours, *sangats* or congregations of the Sikhs were established at numerous places. Bhai Gurdas writes in this connection, 'centres of worship were established wherever Baba (Nanak) set foot. All the Siddh centres in the world became centres of Guru Nanak's teachings. In every house, a *dharmsal* was established and *kirtan* was held (as if it were) an unending Baisakhi festival.'<sup>6</sup> Thus, a network of *dharmals* sprang up for preaching the teachings of Guru Nanak and singing God's Name. Everybody, who was willing to join the *sangat* was welcomed because no distinction of caste was observed by Guru Nanak. The idea of *sangat* had its origin in *sadh sangat* or *sat sangat* (holy assemblage). Guru Nanak explained *sat sangat* as 'the assembly, where solely the name of God is repeated.' *Sangat* came to hold a respectable and unique place in Sikh religion.

Closely connected with the *sangat* was the *pangat* or the row of people dining in the community mess, called *langar*. In Guru's *langar* meals were prepared and served by anyone without any restriction. In this way, the bonds of caste were loosened. Irrespective of their castes, the followers of Nanak ate the same food while sitting together in rows.

Guru Nanak attached great importance to the person of Guru in the perspective of religion. He said, 'Without the Guru, all is darkness.'<sup>7</sup> In Sikhism, the Guru is both a saviour and a prophet. Nanak says in *Japji* :

---

4. *Ibid*, Parbhati, Mahalla 1, p. 1330.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 1411.

6. *Vārān*, Var 1, Pauri, 27.

7. *Adi Granth*, Sri Rag, Mahalla 1, p. 55.

The Guru shows the way.<sup>8</sup>

At another place Guru Nanak says :

The Guru is the ladder, the Guru is the boat,

The Guru is the raft.<sup>9</sup>

While giving the Guru an exalted position, Guru Nanak chose a successor. This was the most vital step in the transformation of Sikh religion.

Wherever he went, Guru Nanak thrilled people by reciting self-composed and spontaneous hymns with a natural flow of music. He went to south-west Punjab accompanied by Mardana, a Muslim rebeck-player of his native village. He showed his disapproval of Malik Bhago, a rich man of his own *Kshatriya* caste at Syedpur in Gujranwala, by declining the invitation to stay with one who had enriched himself by unfair means. The Guru preferred to grace the modest residence of a faithful and sincere man of thought and deeds, named Bhai Lalo, a carpenter, who earned his livelihood by the sweat of his brow.

The Guru, thus, showed that honest living was more dignified than the dishonest living by those of high origin. He preached the dignity of labour. He considered honesty and hard work as fundamental to the building of moral strength, for, his emphasis was on the paramountcy of the soul. At Achal Batala, in Gurdaspur district, he debated with Yogis. Bhai Gurdas gives a pen portrait of the encounter. Bhangar Nath Yogi curiously asked the Guru why he had endeavoured to mix vinegar with milk. The implication was that the Guru had polluted the life of seclusion, led previously by him, by starting a household and taking up a worldly way of living. The pot containing milk of spirituality had been spoiled and no butter—the gist of spirituality had come out of the churning. The Guru replied that God graced only clean hearts. The Guru added that the Yogi considered himself pious only by living the life of renunciation, forgetting that he had to depend on householders for his basic needs. The Guru condemned renunciation and the methods of torture of the body.

During his journeys, Guru Nanak Dev visited Multan, the centre of Sufi saints. Four things were prominent about Multan—dust, heat, beggars and graveyards. The Guru spent a night at Tulamba and reformed Sajjan, who pretended to be a holy man but was in fact a tyrant-robber who waylaid the travellers or killed them after inviting

8. *Ibid.*, Japji, p. 2.

9. *Ibid.*, Sri Rag, Mahalla I, p. 17.



them to spend the night at his place. The robber was reformed by the Guru's divine songs. The Guru established the first *dharamsal* there and nominated Sajjan as a missionary.

Bhai Gurdas portrays how a brimming milk-bowl was presented to the Guru by the Sufi saints. It indicated that Multan was already overcrowded by saints and stood in no more need of him. The Guru returned the bowl with a jasmine flower, meaning thereby that he could also be accommodated there among the other saintly beings, multiplying fragrance. The Guru is said to have visited Pakpattan twice. He discussed spirituality with Sheikh Braham, the head of the Sufi school of thought.

The Sheikh told the Guru of the inability of a worldly man to attain Godhead, chiefly because between the two boats there was the danger of drowning. The Guru remarked that in his opinion that was safer because if one boat sank, the other would not. In other words, spiritual attachment offered protection from worldly involvement and the obligation of family life curbed the tendency of renunciation. The Guru then visited Dipalpur, Kanganpur and various other places, propagating the message that God's name was the cure for all the ills of humanity.

Guru Nanak's journey eastwards was from 1497 to 1509, covering Kurukshetra, Delhi, Mathura, Agra, Hardwar, Ayodhya, Banaras and Gaya. He stayed at Delhi only for a few days. There, he is said to have offered drinking water, drawn from a well to the passers-by. His visit is commemorated by the historic shrine known as Nanak Piyao.

On his way back, from Banaras, the Guru visited Puri, Bhopal, Jhansi, Gwalior, Bharatpur, Rewari, Thanesar, etc. He demonstrated the kind of *aarti* to be performed by men of God. The creation has a divine message. It provides the kind of worship through which Godhead can be attained through the repetition of His Name. The Guru made the symbolic use of the firmament as salver. The sun and the moon were the lamps. The galaxy of stars was compared to the pearls studded in the sky for the worship of the Divine Being, so on and so forth. All this was stated to elucidate the fundamental truth that an understanding of the mysteries of nature could lead to God.

Guru Nanak Dev's next journey was southward and it lasted for about six years (1510-1515). Bala, a Sandhu Jat by caste, seems to have accompanied him. The Guru covered present Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat, Sind and West Punjab. The Guru pointed out to Shivrabh, the ruler of Ceylon, who had asked certain questions, that human beings were bound by the law of *Karma*. Those, performing noble deeds

escape transmigration of the soul and become immortal through worshipping His Name.

Guru Nanak Dev's journey to the north spanned about two years. The Guru visited Jawalamukhi, Kangra, Kulu, Lahaul, Spiti, Tibet, China, Garhwal and Sirmur. He held religious debates with the disciples of Yogis Gorakh Nath and Machhendra Nath and clarified the issues raised by them. The yogis adopting *Hath Yoga* as a way of life, claimed supernatural powers through control of the nerve cells and mental and physical exercises leading to the torture of the body. They could suspend breath in deep meditation. The Guru disfavoured extreme and severe methods of penance, though self-discipline was stressed for peace of mind. The Guru prescribed *Selaj Yoga* for controlling the senses. He made out that *Yoga* consisted in abiding pure amid the impurities of the world. God should be sought from within.

The yogis of Mount Sumer wanted to know the state of affairs in their motherland. The Guru did not approve of the ethics of adopting an indifferent attitude towards the world which was suffering from upheavals. He thought that it was the opportune time for the yogis to serve humanity. The Guru explained that the moon of truth had been eclipsed by the darkness of untruth. The rulers committed sins and did not perform the duty of protecting the people. The people, in their turn, were devoid of any true understanding and divine knowledge. The *qazis*, who were the custodians of justice, indulged in corrupt practices. Without true spiritual leadership there was no way of saving the world from the grip of tyranny and sin.

Guru Nanak Dev was accompanied by Mardana on his journey to west Asia. Besides other places, the Guru visited Mecca and Medina, the holy places of Muslim pilgrimage. Bhai Gurdas gives a vivid picture of the Guru's activities there. He was dressed in blue and carried a staff, an earthen jug and a small carpet to sit on for singing prayers. While sleeping with his feet towards Kaaba, the holy shrine, he is said to have aroused the anger of the head priest, who objected strongly to this sacrilege committed by the Guru. The Guru emphasised that God was omnipresent and graced all the four directions. He even suggested that his feet be turned in the direction where there was no God. The Guru's dynamic philosophy appealed to the people there.

Guru Nanak Dev, during his visit to Baghdad clarified that Allah, Ram and Rahim were the same. Mosques and temples, all aimed at God. There was no Hindu, no Musalman—that was his message. Guru Nanak Dev also visited Iran, Afghanistan, Kandahar and Kabul. On his return to the Punjab, he stayed at Hasan Abdal where he enligh-



tened one Wali Qandhari who hailing from Kandahar had settled down at the place.

Besides his views on various religious issues expressed from time to time, Guru Nanak Dev has given a graphic picture of the political situation of his times, together with the moral degradation of the people. He explained that righteousness had vanished and falsehood prevailed. God was forsaken for sensual pleasures. Suffering was, therefore, inevitable. On the eve of Babar's invasion of India in 1521, the people of this country suffered from their own failings, which God willed. A special reference has been made by Guru Nanak to the devastation of hearths and homes of the people of Eminabad by the Mughals. The massacre by the victorious army of Babar was lamented by the Guru. It was in pursuit of his higher religious aims of treading on the path of righteousness and the attainment of salvation that he condemned political tyranny.

Guru Nanak Dev had his own unique, simple and direct method of generating ideas in others. He devoted the best part of his life to the propagation of his doctrines of universal love of God and brotherhood of man. He struggled hard to create harmony between Hinduism and Islam. Many people from all castes and creeds became his followers. The author of *Khulast-ut-Tawarikh*, writing in 1696, said : 'if a man comes at the dead of night and utters the name of Baba Nanak, though he may be absolutely a stranger to all or even a thief or a wayfarer or of a doubtful character, he is always welcomed as a brother and, as such, is served forthwith'.<sup>10</sup>

Guru Nanak Dev closely observed the religious way of thinking of various schools of thought wherever he went, and with a broad vision preached moral principles based on humanitarianism, in spontaneous poetry and music.

---

10. Bhandari, Sujan Rai, 'Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh' published in *Makhiz-i-Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, edited by Ganda Singh (Amritsar, 1949), p. 58.

## Punjab Peasantry during Akbar's Reign

Pritpal Singh Bedi\*

### Summary

Research on Mughal nobility of Akbar has accidentally revealed some facts about Punjab peasantry in those days. *Akbar Nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* throw only hints about them. Punjab was administered first just like other states in principle. Of course, Punjabi temperament had its ways. Land revenue was the main source of income. Land was either directly under the ownership of the crown or it was under *jagirdars*. Thus, the welfare of a peasant was either in the hands of a government agent or the *jagirdars*.

In 1568, Feroz Shah's Western Jamuna Canal was got re-excavated by Akbar and its water irrigated a large tract of land. Akbar promptly provided relief whenever the peasants were in distress. In 1590, he gave relief to the cultivators when prices of grains fell on account of bumper crop. However, he did not hesitate to increase the revenue when peasants were benefited due to increase in prices. Life and property of peasantry was well protected during Akbar's reign. He took strong action against erring officials. Even, Afghan traders were not spared when they exploited the weak. One can safely say that Akbar was a benevolent ruler and took prompt action against those who acted with cruelty towards peasants.

—Editor

---

\*Lecturer in History, Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jalandhar.



## Art and Architecture of the Golden Temple

Madanjit Kaur\*

The Sikh architecture is at once striking and attractive and presents a certain character. It harmonises with the Hindu style.<sup>1</sup> Specimens of this style are the Sikh shrines at Amritsar. The most striking example of the synthesis, wrought by the Sikh mind in Muslim styles of architecture, is the celebrated Golden Temple, the Harimandir, which may be said to represent the Sikh architecture in all its distinctive features.<sup>2</sup> It testifies the fact that the Sikhs had acquired skill in adopting patterns and motifs suiting their own religion, taste, philosophy and way of living.

With its exterior covered all over with golden plates and marble, and the interior profusely decorated with fresco-paintings and filigree embellishments, the Golden Temple is no doubt the acme of Sikh architecture.<sup>3</sup>

The Golden Temple owes its present structure to the joint efforts of the *misl*s. It began to take shape from the year 1765 A.D. By then, the Sikhs had beaten back successfully Ahmad Shah Abdali and his hordes. The marble laying and gold-plating, however, came much later through the philanthropy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who had great reverence for this nerve centre of Sikh power. A number of Sikh sardars also made their contributions in this service.

The architecture of the Golden Temple is marked by the beauty of its superb setting. The overall effect of the temple is very striking. The central shrine raising its head in the middle of the big tank, with its enchanting reflection in the clear water with only a single bridge to reach, imparts the building a heavenly look.

It is evident from the Sikh chronicles that the original design of the Harimandir was envisaged by Guru Arjun Dev himself. The temple

---

\*Reader, Department of Guru Nanak Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

1. Browne, Percy, *Indian Architecture* (Bombay, 1968), p. 114.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

3. Roop, Harinder Singh, *Sikh te Sikhi* (Lahore, 1947), p. 46.

was built in 1604 A.D. The Guru rejected the traditional style of temple architecture which had one or two doors and selected four door-structure which opened entry to all castes. The message of the four-door architectural structure of the Golden Temple to mankind is unmistakable—'open out your mind to the flood of divine light and see for yourself that inspite of hundreds of seeming differences, man is essentially the same everywhere and deserves to be allowed to live a free, peaceful and honourable life.'

The Harimandir was pulled down by the Afghan invaders thrice, each time to be rebuilt with renewed energy. It can, therefore, be presumed with some amount of certainty that the very design has adequately been retained in its present structure, barring, minor alterations and architectural decorations.

The premises of the Golden Temple is approached through archway built on the eastern side i. e. the erstwhile clock tower side of the temple. The entrance porch has a dome in modern structure with a big clock fixed just below it. The sacred tank, which holds the temple in its midst like a lotus flower is 150 metres square and 17 feet deep. Running around the outer edge of the tank is a marble pavement (*parikarma*) 60 feet wide with marble slabs of various shapes, designs and colours. Operations are still going on to make all the sides of the *parikarma* uniform.

The architecture of the Darshani Deorhi (the entrance gate) is extremely impressive. The air-house on the top of the Deorhi stands modelled in the Bengal Mughal *chhatra* style. The gate form of the Darshani Deorhi is 10 feet by 8 feet. The wooden portals attached with it are made of *shisham* wood and are six inches thick, covered with silver sheets. These, in their turn, are ornamented with panels. At the backside of the door are square and rectangular panels inlaid in artistic ivory work. There are geometrical and floral designs. Birds and animals (viz. lions, tigers and deer) are depicted in these designs. Green and red colour is also used in the ivory inlay of the Darshani Deorhi. The overall effect of the ivory craftsmanship is extremely rhythmical.

An interesting story relating to the acquisition of the portals of this gate is often narrated. It is believed that they originally belonged to the famous Somnath Temple and were taken away by Mahmud of Ghazna during one of his several invasions. These were later on recovered by the armies of Ranjit Singh from the Afghans and got fixed in the temple, but there is no historical evidence to support this oral tradition.



According to another version, the portals were got prepared by one Bhai Des Raj in A.D. 1765 i.e. during the *misl* period out of voluntary contributions made by the people, and the inlay in ivory work, however, reminds more of the pristine glory of Hindu craftsmanship than of Muslim.

A causeway, about 60 metres long, spans the water on the western side of the tank to connect the temple with the Darshani Deorhi. The causeway has balustrades on either side. Each baluster is crowned with elegant lantern made of copper-gilt. They are nine on each side. Reaching the centre of the tank, the causeway opens into a platform, 20 metre square, over which the temple proper (52 square metres) stands.

The square building of the central shrine is a two-storeyed structure<sup>4</sup> over which rises a low-fluted majestic dome in copper, covered with gold. The dome is designed after the shape of a lotus flower. The petals of the dome present a very harmonious setting. Architecturally, the dome presents neither exclusively the Hindu form nor the Muslim one. It shows an evolution of its own called the synthesis of the two styles. The central dome puts up splendidly sparkling appearance in sunshine. The glittering beauty of the dome has been a subject of absorbing interest for the Punjab poets, singing *mahima* (glory) of the Harimandir.

A number of smaller domes drawn in a line decorate the parapet.<sup>5</sup> Four *chhatris* (kiosks) with fluted metal cupolas stand at each corner. The floor of the upper storey is paved with Nanak Shahi bricks. These red bricks are broad on the top and narrow at the bottom and stand exquisitely laid in very fine brick-mortar and lime. They have a fine black clay lining too. The frequent introduction of windows supported on brackets and the enrichment of arches with numerous foliations on the first floor give a picturesque appearance. Intricate designs on marble, inlaid with stones of different hues on the entrance to the inner sanctuary, provide a great attraction to the visitors. A large hall forms the interior of the Harimandir. The holy *Guru Granth* (the holy scripture of the Sikhs) rests under a gorgeous canopy in the centre of this hall. Fine filigree and enamel work in gold decorate the interior of this hall. The door on the southern side of the central hall provides approach to the water in the holy tank. The steps

4. Browne, Percy, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

5. The combination of several dozens of large, medium and miniature domes of gilded copper creates a dazzling effect, enhanced by the reflection in the water below.

are called Har-ki-Pauri. The ceiling of the portico of the Har-ki-Pauri is decorated with beautiful *tukri* (glass-mosaic) work. The staircase adjoining Har-ki-Pauri leads to the first floor of the shrine. There is a small square pavilion surmounted by a low-fluted golden dome in this storey. The interior of the pavilion is set with pieces of mirror of different sizes and colour, that is why it is called the Shish Mahal. The hall is 42 feet square. It has been designed so as to leave a square opening in the centre to facilitate view of the ground floor from the balcony. It is said that originally the first floor was a pavilion where the Sikh gurus sat in meditation. The hall was profusely embellished with floral designs during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The inlay work on the ceiling as well as the walls of the Shish Mahal, is reminiscent of the great skill of our artists. This part of the building is now used for *akhand pathis* (non-stop reading of the holy *Granth*) by devotees from all over the world. The walls of the hall are decorated with floral designs and its arches are ornamented with verses from the *Guru Granth*, reproduced in letters of gold. This seems to be an imitation of the Muslim practice of engraving verses from the holy *Quran*.<sup>6</sup> The Sikh artists, however, have maintained the excellence of their art and have not allowed *Gurbani* (Sikh scripture) to dominate. The walls of the hall stand inlaid with figures and floral designs adorned and studded at places with precious stones. The craftsmanship of this *jaratkari* (mosaic) reminds us of the *pietra-dura* tradition. The Sikh artists seem to have taken the motifs from the Vedantic concept of life and had given a philosophical outlook to art.

The walls of the first floor contain fine art work in plaster of Paris too. The ceiling of the central dome is admittedly a work of rare craftsmanship. The decoration on the porch of the first floor displays fine *naqqashi* in gold and various colours and cut-glasses of different shapes and varieties. Likewise, the wall of the stairs leading to the second floor abound in some of the rare masterpieces of the Sikh paintings.<sup>7</sup>

The architecture of the Golden Temple testifies to the fact that the Sikhs vociferously patronised the architectural embellishments and ornamental accretions to their mansions. They spent lavishly in beautifying their holy temple.

The desire to see their temples gloriously constructed impels the

---

6. Roop, Harinder Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

7. Browne, Percy, *op. cit.*, p. 115.



devotees even today to present their offerings in the form of marble slabs and gold. The slabs are laid at various places in the temple with inscriptions carved on them giving the names of the donors and the amounts donated by them.

The embossed metal work of the Golden Temple is a specimen of excellence attained by the Sikh craftsmanship in the skilful harmony of brass and copper.<sup>8</sup>

The same is the case with frescos, *naqqashi* and applied arts displayed at the temple.<sup>9</sup> The wood-carving and the ivory mosaic work of the temple display admirable perfection of the Sikh artists in this craft.<sup>10</sup> The Sikh artists had a genuine sense and appreciation of nature in the setting and architecture of the temple.

The walls, corridors and panels of the Golden Temple contain a variety of excellent *mohrakashi* or fresco-paintings.<sup>11</sup> These frescos are said to be modelled after the wall paintings of its time found in the Kangra valley.

Most of the fresco-paintings of the Golden Temple are representations of Hindu mythological themes. They reflect the original spirit of the Vaishnava cult, but the technique has suitably been modified to suit the needs of the Sikh art. The tolerance of the Sikhs towards other religions motivated the Sikh artists to borrow extensively from the Hindu and Muslim traditions. Moreover, it reflects the outlook of the Sikh artists who had not enough time to make experiments of their own. Hence, they borrowed the fresco technique from the Hindu tradition.

Most of the fresco-paintings are, thus, an adaptation of the Hindu, the Persian and the Mughal motifs. Still the distinctive setting and combination of plants, flowers, birds and animals betray some originality. These do not merely repeat the old themes in the old style but show dimensions with added meanings. The Sikh craftsmen expanded the canvas of Hindu fresco from the Krishna cult to the pantheistic trend. Although the Sikh artists adopted the Mughal *mohrakashi* style involving the Iranian motifs of bold flowers of glamorous colours and geometrical designs, yet the Sikh artists penetrated deep into the spirit of the art and depicted fine samples of their own. Consequently, human figures, animals, birds, flowers

8. *Ibid.*

9. For drawings, see, *Marg*, Vol. X, No. 2, 1957, pp. 26-27.

10. Kang, Kanwarjit Singh, 'Art and Architecture of the Golden Temple', *Marg*, Vol. XXX, No. 3, June, 1977, p. 24.

11. Sardar Atma Singh Naqqash is the best working artist in this craft.

and leaves can be seen drawn in their natural settings. Bright colours, cut-glass and coloured stones have frequently been used.<sup>12</sup> Beautiful borders in traditional designs enhance the aesthetic value of the mural paintings.

Taking stock of the whole, the contribution of the Golden Temple to the art of fresco-painting lies in the preservation of the native traditions and in an extension of the art of the Kangra and allied schools.

The conception of the total complex of the Harimandir is not the work of individual mind. It is rather the outcome of the composite mind of the whole community. Besides, it went on for long spreading almost over a century. It is, thus, an evolutionary growth. In course of time it grew into a complex of buildings spread all around it, most of which were the duplication of the same architectural design. Till the middle of this century the Golden Temple stood surrounded by a number of *bungas* (rest-houses). Most of these buildings have now been pulled down under the new *parikarma* scheme. The new structures raised in their places are likely to lend a still greater unity and coherence to the whole complex.

Some significant conclusions derived from the present study are given below :

As the title denotes, the paper presents a study of the Punjab art and architecture of the nineteenth century in the restricted sense of the term in the case of the Golden Temple, the living symbol of the historical traditions and cultural heritage of four centuries of the Sikh community.

The Golden Temple represents the Sikh art in all its distinctive features. The Temple testifies to the fact that the Sikhs had acquired skill in adopting patterns and motifs suiting to their religion, philosophy, taste and way of living.

The Golden Temple is a landmark in the history of the Indian architecture. The construction of the Golden Temple with four doors and its greater capacity to accommodate larger number of devotees transformed the traditional Indian concept of the temple structure confined for the Divinity and the priest with one or two doors where the faithfuls, being profane, had to stay out. The original design of the Golden Temple was envisaged by Guru Arjan Dev. The Harimandir was built in 1604 A.D. It was pulled down by the Afghan invaders thrice, each time to be rebuilt with renewed energy. The last

---

12. Roop, Harinder Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 49.



construction came up during the period of the Sikh *misls* in 1765 A.D. It can be presumed with great amount of certainty that the original design has adequately been retained in its present structure barring minor alterations and architectural decorations. It was given a marble face and a golden look during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It got the name of Golden Temple from the Europeans. The concept of the total complex of the Golden Temple is not the work of individual mind, it is rather the outcome of the composite mind of the whole community.

Temple construction in India has been essentially characterised and predominantly decorated with sculptures of deities and idols. No attention was paid to provide a natural atmosphere to the setting. As idol worshipping had no place in Sikh religion, the Sikh artists had no incentive to follow Hindu architecture. They turned their attention to the Mughal style which had wider dimensions and vast scope of technique, design and patterns. Similarly, the Sikh artists had not much to draw for their inspiration from Kangra and Rajput schools because Sikhism had no place for idol worship and mythology. However, the Sikh artists adopted the use of gay colour scheme, technique and the art of depiction of nature and landscape from Kangra School. Besides, they learned a lot from the Mughal style in designs and patterns. The Sikh artists also looked into the heritage of Indian schools of painting viz, Jain, Buddhists etc. and selected whatever suited their requirements. They combined together various elements of technique derived from different schools, made experiments and brought out a synthesis of Hindu-Muslim styles in a harmonious, natural and soothing blending. Therefore, the contribution of the Golden Temple to art and architecture of India lies in the preservation of the native traditions and in an extension of them in the form of new experiments.

It is to be noted here that although it can not be denied that the origin of the techniques of the applied arts used by the nineteenth century Punjab artists in the embellishment of the Golden Temple can no doubt be traced to ancient Greek, Roman and Ancient Indian civilisations, but there is hardly any justification in making a parallel study of them and interpreting the art of the Golden Temple as borrowed one, as has been done by some modern scholars.<sup>13</sup>

The Golden Temple is the greatest instance of Punjab art and

13. Mehta, Gurcharan Singh, 'Harimandir Sahib di Kala,' *Khoj Darpan*, July-August, 1982, Amritsar, pp. 24-32.

architecture. Its comparatively distinct structure is enhanced in beauty and grandeur by the elegance of its architecture and perfect skill of its applied arts. What is more striking in its design is its unique framework. Every dimension shows individuality of conception and originality of composition.

The beauty and splendour of the Golden Temple has attracted the attention of the poets, tourists and scholars from its very inception. An art historian Percy Browne has applauded its architectural merits. However, his review of the art and architecture of the Golden Temple was primarily technical. This paper makes an attempt to deal with the socio-cultural aspect besides, observing the technical merits of the art and architecture of the Golden Temple.

The overall majestic view of the Golden Temple standing like a lotus in the water is in itself the proof of the aesthetics of the people of the Punjab. Its interior decoration, excellent fresco *tukri* and *jaratkari* (mosaic), *gach* (stucco) and *naqqashi*, gold embossed relief (*warak*), wood work and other applied arts furnish enough material for the study of the development and growth of art and architecture, painting, motifs and symbols in this region. All these features provide reflections of the contemporary socio-cultural life of the Punjab society. The applied arts of the temple are proof, that, for the Punjab society, religion was a real thing. The social context within the study makes interesting reading. The artistic aspirations of the Sikh artists and artisans, the character of the Sikhs, their religious attitude towards their places of worship, beliefs, philosophy, customs, symbols, their economic condition and their cultural attainments etc.,—all these aspects can be viewed and grasped through the panorama of art embodied in the complex of the Golden Temple.

The artists and masons engaged in the construction and beautification of the Golden Temple belonged to different parts of northern India viz.. Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal and Kashmir. Their prime object had been to emphasise the sublime spiritual and secular character of the temple.

The Golden Temple of Amritsar is not only a place of worship but an historical index for the socio-cultural, religious and economic life of the contemporary Punjab society.



## Tradition of Miri and Piri in Sikhism

Manjit Kaur\*

### Summary

The words *miri* and *piri* come from the Islamic tradition. *Miri* has been generally used to denote temporal power. The cognate word *amir* signifies one who commands, namely, a military general or a commander. Khalifa, who was the successor to Hazarat Muhammad, was originally considered the military commander. The word *piri* has a religious connotation and is used in respect of one with spiritual qualities and power.

In Sikhism, we find a unique synthesis of the spiritual and the temporal qualities. Man is divine in essence and the ultimate object of his spiritual quest is to develop this aspect of his nature. This takes him in the direction of *piri*. Man also lives in society and as such he engages in worldly activity which represents the *miri* aspect. In Sikhism both are important. During his travels, Guru Nanak established *ṣangats* at various places. Guru Amar Das established twenty-two *manjis* or preaching centres to unify the growing Sikh society. Stress was laid on the aspect of fearlessness of God by Guru Nanak. *Gurbani* speaks of the sovereign nature of God in comparison with the temporal kings. *Miri* and *piri* are centralized in guruship to which Guru Hargobind gave a formal and visible shape by wearing two swords, one representing *miri* and the other representing *piri* at the time of his investiture as successor to the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan. The power of *miri* was to be obtained by treading upon the path of *dharma*; it was not to be used for inflicting injury on others or to exercise tyranny but to bring about righteousness. The path of *piri* was to be pursued to give oneself over to *seva* (voluntary service) to secure the welfare of all.

—Editor

---

\*V. & P. O. Narangwal, District Ludhiana.

## Social and Economic Data of Kashmir in the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri

Hem Raj\*

There generated a great love and attraction for Kashmir in the heart of Jahangir when he paid visits to the valley.<sup>1</sup> This becomes quite evident when we learn from his memoirs that he visited the enchanting land every second or third year of his reign. To him Kashmir appeared like an eternal spring or like an iron fort to a palace of kings—a delightful flower-bed and a heart expanding heritage for darveshes. The beauty of its pleasant meads and bewitching cascades was beyond all description. The enchanting springs, the hills and plains filled with blossoms, the walls, the courts, the roofs with adorning tulips and the fragrant trefoils, all made a deep impression on the heart of the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> He gave vent to the ecstasy of his mind in the following verses :

At each fountain the duck dipped his beak  
Like golden scissors cutting silk ;  
There were flower-carpets and fresh rosebuds,  
The wind fanned the lamps of the roses;  
The violet braided her locks,  
The buds tied a knot in the heart.<sup>3</sup>

When Jahangir visited Kurimarg, he observed that "it was a page that the painter of destiny had drawn with the pencil of creation."<sup>4</sup> During his first visit to Kashmir in 1607 A.D., he visited many places like Machhi, Achhabal, Virnag and so on. About Virnag, Jahangir remarked that it seemed as if there was no sight of such beauty and fascinating character elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> The Emperor remained in Agra or roamed throughout India, but his soul sought shelter into the flower-beds of the valley. He was so bewitched by the celestial beauty of

---

\* Lecturer, I.G.N. College, Ladwa (Krukshetra).

1. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (tr. & ed.), Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. I, pp. 90-92.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 144.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 174.



Kashmir that he could not resist the feeling of mentioning it in the memoirs which is our principal source of information for the history of Kashmir under his rule.

He frequently mentions many peculiarities of Kashmir. It was the sole producer of saffron in India. The people neither ploughed nor irrigated the land which produced saffron but the plants sprang up among the clods. When the saffron plants were four inches high their flowers shot out with four petals and four threads of orange colour in the middle. The sharp scent of saffron often created headache, but the Kashmiri labourers who collected the flowers had been addicted to it.<sup>6</sup>

Pampur, a place ten *kos* from Srinagar had been the biggest producer of saffron in Kashmir.<sup>7</sup> About 400 to 500 *maunds* of saffron was collected from this place every year.<sup>8</sup> The government took 50% of the total produce and the remaining 50% was the share of the cultivators. A *seer* of saffron was normally sold for ten rupees. Labourers, who plucked its flowers, took half its weight in salt as wages. Salt was not produced in Kashmir but imported from India.<sup>9</sup> So the labouring class had much importance for this commodity. Since the reign of Akbar the cultivation of saffron was brought under the direct control of the government as it proved to be a paying crop.

Kashmiris sowed all crops except pea. Rice being their staple food, was grown in abundance.<sup>10</sup> They produced a little wheat, small in size and of little substance because the Kashmiris were not used to eating bread.<sup>11</sup>

Kashmir had been the home of fruits. The Mirzai apple was famous for its sweetness.<sup>12</sup> The *nashpati* was of the best kind, even better than those of Kabul and Badakhshan. Grapes were also grown but of inferior quality. Pomegranates, melons, water-melons, grew in abundance. The valley was, however, famous for the production of silk. The *shatoot* trees bred silk-worms. But the eggs of these worms were generally brought from Tibet and Gilgit. Other vegetables and fruits of Kashmir were garlic, apricot, almond and peach.<sup>13</sup>

---

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 93.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 178.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 145, 146, 159.

In Kashmir there used to be a kind of tree named Halthal. If one of the branches was shaken, the whole tree moved in a shivering motion. Jahangir saw the tree with his own eyes. On Pir Panjal, there had been a kind of tree consisting of big flowers in tricolour. This tree was unique to the other parts of the country. It could only be found on certain places where snow remained only for a week or so. No tax had been levied on fruit trees during the reign of Jahangir. Not even a single *dam* entered the public treasury on this account.<sup>14</sup> Jahangir mentions many flowers and birds of Kashmir which fascinated him.<sup>15</sup>

Kashmir remained always poor regarding animal wealth. There were no buffaloes in Kashmir and the cattle were small and inferior. Tail-less sheep called *handu* were found in large numbers.<sup>16</sup> Kashmir had small horses except ponies. But during the Mughal period Turki horses were given to the *jagirdars*. Some people brought their own horses in the valley. Kashmiri horses could be bought or sold for rupees two hundred or three hundred and in some cases rupees one thousand.<sup>17</sup> Kashmir bulls were like buffaloes, and they had hair on their necks.<sup>18</sup> Kashmir people called a stag, a *kail*.<sup>19</sup> Tigers, panthers, rhinoceroses, wild buffaloes, black antelopes, hog-deer, *nilgais*, wild asses, hares, lynxes and wild-cats were rarely found in Kashmir. Musk-deer was also available in Kashmir but its meat was never delicious.<sup>20</sup>

Kashmiris used rice as their principal diet which they boiled and called it *bhat*. They boiled vegetables like *karam* and put salt into it to change the flavour. They ate it with the boiled rice. Sometimes they mixed walnut oil or ghee with it. Wine, vinegar and pickle of garlic was freely used. They were non-vegetarians and sheep and birds were generally eaten by all except the Brahmins.<sup>21</sup> Except for a few orthodox Muslims, cow was considered a sacred animal by Hindus and Muslims alike.<sup>22</sup> There were all kinds of fish but these were of inferior quality.<sup>23</sup> The special dress of the Kashmiris both men and women has been described in detail in the *Memoirs of Jahangir*

---

14. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 134-145, 147, 164, 168-69,

16. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 147,

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 93.

22. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 147.

23. *Ibid.*



and he also points out that woolen cloth and shawls were very famous throughout India.<sup>24</sup> The buildings in Kashmir were made of wood with two, three or four storeys high. Roofs of the houses were covered with earth. Chaughasi, a kind of flowering creeper was planted on the roofs which bloomed every year in the spring season and looked exceedingly beautiful.<sup>25</sup>

We get a valuable glimpse of social life in Kashmir during the reign of Jahangir. The merchants in Kashmir were mostly Sunni Muslims while the soldiers were Imamiya Shias. There was also a group of Hindu rishis who lived a pious and celibate life. The Brahmins of Kashmir learnt the Sanskrit language.<sup>26</sup> The Hindus were all idolaters. The lofty temples built before the manifestation of Islam were still in existence.<sup>27</sup> The principal festivals of the Hindus were Diwali, Raksha-bandhan, Holi and Dussehra.<sup>28</sup> In Rajauri, some women used to bury themselves into the graves along with their husbands. Some people, stricken by extreme poverty, used to put to death their newly born girls. However, this custom of infanticide appears to have been resorted to during famine alone or by people who had very limited means to rear their children. The Muslims and Hindus of Rajauri belonged to one racial stock and used to inter-marry freely. Jahangir stopped these evil customs.<sup>29</sup>

Kashmir, though a virtual paradise on earth, often became a hell when it faced the wrath of nature. Sometimes heavy snowfalls or hailstorms followed by a tremendous drought and epidemics shattered the peace of the valley. In 1618 A. D. plague broke out in a virulent form throughout Kashmir.<sup>30</sup> Within a few days heaps of dead bodies appeared in the open fields as the epidemic did not allow the people enough time to shift to distant places. The animals were also not spared by the epidemic. The decomposing corpses further vitiated the atmosphere. If a dead body was thrown into the field and a cow grazed near it, it also caught the infection and died very soon.<sup>31</sup> The hearts of parents were filled with so much panic and fear that they tried to keep away from their ailing children lest they might pick

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 147-48.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

29. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, p. 442.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 442-43.

up the contagion. Within a few weeks the epidemic took a heavy toll of life. Ahmad Beg, the Governor of Kashmir was one of the casualties.<sup>32</sup> The epidemic was followed by another calamity. As most of the houses were built of wood and these had been left behind vacant and uncared for by fleeing population, some chance mishap led to the outbreak of a terrible fire which gutted many villages and towns. About 3,000 houses disappeared and a large number of people were left on the paths without food or shelter.<sup>33</sup>

Kashmir had always fascinated Jahangir who was pleasure loving. It had been a honey-suckle for him and he always longed to pass his time in Kashmir. He visited Kashmir many times during his reign and his memoirs are full of many valuable accounts of the valley. He never lost sight of anything uncommon which he saw and we find him giving very valuable details of his visits to the valley. While returning from his last excursion in 1627 A.D., he stayed at Biram Kalla for hunting. Here a foot soldier, who was hawking a deer, slipped and lost his life. This accident left a deep scar in the heart of Jahangir. He started his journey reluctantly. On October 27, 1627 A. D., he passed away at Rajauri. According to his wishes, he was buried at Lahore.

During the reign of Jahangir, Kashmir had thirty eight parganas and it was divided into the upper part called Miraj and the lower part called Kamraj. Gold and silver coins were not used for revenue collection. Almost throughout the valley, the revenue was collected in kind. People reckoned the value of commodities in terms of *Kharwars* of rice. The total revenue of Kashmir under Jahangir was 30,63,050 *Kharwars* and 11 *tarks*. This amounted to 7,46,70,000 *dams* in cash.<sup>34</sup>

---

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 143.



## Significance of Guru Gobind Singh's Zafarnama

Harpreet Kaur\*

It was while staying at Dina that Guru Gobind Singh sent a letter in Persian verse to Emperor Aurangzeb. It is known as *Zafarnama* or an epistle of victory. It is a significant letter throwing ample light on Guru Gobind Singh's attitude towards the Mughal Emperor and his government. The Guru sent this letter to Aurangzeb in the Deccan through his trusted Sikhs *Bhai* Daya Singh and *Bhai* Dharam Singh. The letter was delivered to the Emperor at Ahmadnagar. The *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* of Inayatullah refers to a representation made by the Guru for an interview with the Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

*Zafarnama* is a letter comprising one hundred and eleven verses in Persian language. The first twelve verses are in the adoration of God and in the next few verses the Guru mentions that the *bakshis* and *diwans* of the Emperor were all liars and were not true to the oaths taken on the holy *Quran*.<sup>2</sup> Next, the Guru mentions as to how his forty half-starved men were helplessly faced with the innumerable hordes of the Mughals at Chamkaur.<sup>3</sup> The Guru further wrote about his coming forward with his arrows and guns to fight against the promise-breaking Mughals.<sup>4</sup> The Guru pointed out that it was lawful to hold a sword in one's hand as a last resort.<sup>5</sup>

Through this letter the Guru told the Emperor that he possessed a limited power and the supreme authority lay in the hands of God. The Guru accused the Emperor and his officials of backing out from their promises. They did not act in the true spirit of religion and betrayed the people in the name of religion. The Guru told the Emperor that his tyranny and highhandedness showed that he was a misled man.

---

\*Preet Nagar, Lower Mall, Patiala.

1. Teji Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs* (Bombay, 1950), p. 76, f. n. 1.
2. *Zafarnama*, verse 13.
3. *Ibid.*, verse 19.
4. *Ibid.*, verses 20-21.
5. *Ibid.*, verse 22.

Some writers have misinterpreted the contents of this letter. Mohammad Latif writes that towards the close of the reign of Aurangzeb, the Guru lived in peace at Anandpur. But the king, who was then in the Deccan, always felt anxious about him. He, therefore, issued a mandate summoning the Guru to his presence. When the messenger reached Guru Gobind Singh and delivered the royal *farman* to him, he kissed it and placed it on his head in token of respect. He treated the messenger with the greatest honour and told him that he regarded himself as a dependent and a vassal of the 'king of kings' and that to obey His Majesty's command would be an honour to him but, before accompanying the messenger, he would like to submit his grievances to the Emperor in writing.<sup>6</sup>

The misunderstanding of Latif is quite obvious from the above remarks. During the last days of Aurangzeb, neither the Guru was at Anandpur nor was he living in peace. The forces of Wazir Khan were pursuing him hotly. Moreover, far from conceding to the command of Aurangzeb, the Guru told him that if he was anxious to meet him he could come to the Punjab in the Kangar area inhabited by the Brars. There would be no risk to the Emperor's person.<sup>7</sup>

It seems that Aurangzeb, who was 90 years old, suggested the Guru to meet him in the Deccan as he was physically so weak that he could not come to northern India. The Emperor probably wanted to express his regrets to the Guru personally for all the misdeeds and atrocities that he perpetrated on the Sikhs during his life time. The mental position of the Emperor in his last days is clearly reflected in the letter that he wrote to his son, Azam. The letter reads:

Old age has come and weakness has grown. Strength has left my body. I came to this world alone and am going alone. Now I do not know as to who I am and what I have been doing. The days passed without meditation have left nothing but remorse for me. I did not at all give good government to my people, nor I endeared my subjects to me...I did not bring anything with me to this world but I am carrying a load of sins on my shoulders. I do not know as to what retribution I shall have to suffer. Though I have hopes on the grace and kindness of God yet, in view of my misdeeds, fear is gripping me tightly.<sup>8</sup>

Mohammad Latif states that on receiving Guru Godind Singh's

6. Latif, Syed Mohammad, *History of the Punjab* (Calcutta, 1891), p. 267.

7. *Zafarnama*, verses 58-9.

8. Sarkar, Jadu Nath, *A Short History of Aurangzeb* (Calcutta, 1922), p. 364.



letter the Emperor was pleased with its contents. He also felt delighted to see the dress and appearance of the Bhai who had brought it. He bestowed a dress of honour on the messenger and dismissed him with a letter and valuable presents for the Guru. In this letter, the Guru was desired to come to the Emperor's presence in which case he would be received kindly. The Guru accordingly set out to visit Aurangzeb but on his way he heard of the death of the aged monarch.<sup>9</sup>

By reading the contents of *Zafarnama*, the immediate reaction on the Emperor could not be but of anger. But the thorough perusal of the letter seems to have made the Emperor realise of his highhandedness and cruelty inflicted on the Guru's family and his followers. With this consciousness mingled with helplessness caused by old age, the Emperor became more realistic and he ardently desired to see the Guru. It is clear that the Guru was convinced of Aurangzeb's sincere desire to meet him in the Deccan, otherwise the Guru could not risk his life. But some writers wrongly believe that the Guru, not knowing about the success or failure of Daya Singh's mission who had carried *Zafarnama* to Aurangzeb in the Deccan, thought it proper to go to the Deccan himself and settle the affairs with the Emperor there.<sup>10</sup>

It is evident from the above that there was a change in Aurangzeb's policy towards Guru Gobind Singh during his last days. The forces of Sirhind which followed the Guru to Khidrane di Dhab (Muktsar) killed most of the followers of the Guru who had taken shelter there. From there, the Guru came to Talwandi Sabo and stayed there for many months without being harassed by the Mughal forces. The Guru once again started living in peace restoring many social and religious activities to a full bloom. We notice that the Guru also changed his attitude towards the Mughal Emperor in view of the latter's apologetic and remorseful bent of mind. The Guru was not an irreconcilable and an inveterate enemy of the Mughal Emperor or of the Muhammadans as Mohammad Latif believes.<sup>11</sup>

---

9. Latif, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

10. Anonymous, 'Sakhi Pothis', *Sakhi* 105, p. 116; *Khalsa Samachar* (Amritsar, 1950).

11. Latif, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

## Gurmatta

Sukhdial Singh\*

### Summary

*Gurmatta* is an important Sikh institution of the eighteenth century. In fact, the entire structure of Sikh political system of this period was based on this institution. It preserved the unity and cohesion of the Sikhs at a critical period in their history and provided for common action.

*Gurmatta* has been defined by different European writers as a 'grand diet', 'general assembly', 'general council', etc. Albeit the exact connotation of the term may be derived from the word *gurmatta* itself. Literally, *gurmatta* means 'guru's mat' or the decision of the Guru. According to the Sikh belief, Guru is present in the assemblage of the Sikhs or Sikh *sangat* and its unanimous decision is considered as the order of the Guru.

As the political situation of the eighteenth century demanded frequent decisions, the Khalsa assembled frequently at the Akal Takht and adopted *gurmattas* of defensive and offensive nature. In this way most of the decisions concerning the entire *Khalsa* community were taken there. The regular assembly of the misl chiefs met at the Akal Takht twice a year. Actuated by the spirit of patriotism, the chiefs of various misls sacrifice their personal feelings when they met to adopt *gurmattas*. The Akal Takht thus became the central place for adopting *gurmattas* which became the part and parcel of Sikh polity. *Gurmattas* were adopted even outside the Akal Takht but it depended on the exigency of the time. The *gurmattas* lost their significance during the regime of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as those did not fit in the political machinery evolved by him. —Editor

---

\*Research Assistant, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.



## Education During the Sikh Rule

Surinder Kaur\*

Though in the beginning of the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Punjab was torn by dissensions, intrigues, and foreign invasions yet it preserved and added to the educational endowments. Leitner writes that every one, whether a chief or a *zamindar* or a shopkeeper, contributed to the cause of education either by founding and maintaining *Pathshalas* or by assisting the needy scholars with money, clothes and food.<sup>1</sup> The people were given education in *Pathshalas*. A *Madrassa* or *Pathshala* was attached to almost every mosque, temple and gurdwara where students were provided with free boarding and lodging if required.<sup>2</sup>

We may first take up *Pathshalas* where Gurmukhi script was taught. Punjabi was the language spoken by the Punjabis.<sup>3</sup> Made popular by Guru Angad, *Gurmukhi* script held a high status in the Punjab and to learn and study it was considered sacred duty of every Sikh. It was in *Gurmukhi* that the holy *Granth* was written. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had his seals in *Gurmukhi*. It was used in correspondence by the Sikhs. Persian was the court language and orders were given in it.<sup>4</sup> The *Gurmukhi Pathshalas* were attached either to gurdwaras or housed in separate buildings. A teacher was called *Bhai Ji*. The curriculum was divided into elementary and advanced studies. A child attaining the age of six was sent to the *Pathshala* where instruction was given to him in reading, writing and multiplication tables. The *pothis* used for reading were entirely of religious character. The child was first introduced to the study of *Japji* and other compositions from the *Granth*.<sup>5</sup> There was no arrangement for the teaching of

---

\* Lecturer in History, Guru Nanak College for Women, Banga.

1. Leitner, G.W., *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab since Annexation* (Calcutta, 1882), p. 132.
2. *District Gazetteer, Shahpur*, 1883-84, pp. 42-3.
3. *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1809, p. 457.
4. *Foreign Deptt., Secret Consultations*, 20th Dec., 1845, Nos. 106-8.
5. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

Geography.<sup>6</sup>

A student read *Hunuman Natak* composed of mixed Hindi and Punjabi and written in *Gurmukhi* characters, after he had acquired the mastery of holy *Granth*s. This followed Tulsi Das's *Ramyana*, written in classical Hindi but in *Gurmukhi* characters. Afterwards, *Bhagwad Gita* and other holy books in *Gurmukhi* script were taught. The well-known work called *Janam Sakhi*-s, and *gurbilas*-s, written in prose in *Gurmukhi* script were studied by the pupils. However, vast study of Rhetoric in *Gurmukhi*<sup>7</sup> was a part of curriculum.

After the child had learnt the form of letters of alphabet on the ground, he was promoted to the dignity of a wooden board called *Phatti* or *Takhti* which was first blackened over with soot, and then dried in the sun and was then written on with *Pandu* (white clay) or *Khariya Mitti* (chalk) dissolved in water. It was easily washed off. A pen was easily obtained from every thatch or hedge of *Sarkara* (reed).<sup>8</sup> A child then learnt the form of numerals and simple enumeration. He then wrote down the names of gods, of the members of his family, of surrounding objects, of eatables and indeed of everything that could be pointed out to him or that could create interest in him.<sup>9</sup>

In the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh there flourished many *Gurmukhi Pathshalas* and *Madrasas*. Amritsar was a prominent centre of *Gurmukhi* learning and the important *Gurmukhi* schools included Bhai Juna Singh Granthi School, Bhai Lakhan Singh School, Bhai Ram Singh School, Bhai Kharak Singh Dhupia School, Bawa Amar Dass Udasi School and Bhai Budh Singh School.<sup>10</sup>

*Mahajani* schools known as *Pathshalas* were found in cities and towns and were meant exclusively for the sons of the mercantile classes, such as Khatris, Mahajans and Vaishs. The education given in these schools enabled the students to carry on their trade and keep accounts. The teacher of *Mahajani* school was called *Pandha*.<sup>11</sup>

A *Mahajani* school was a sort of nursery school where the children were kept away from doing mischief and the parents were saved from

6. *Punjab Administration Report* 1849-51, p. 143.

7. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 180.

11. *Settlement Report, Ludhiana District*, 1853, p. 159; Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes* (Lahore, 1916), p. 406.



the trouble of attending to them at homes which were often crowded and noisy.<sup>12</sup>

What gave the *Mahajani* school its special character, was its arithmetic, both mental and oral. By the rules or *gurs* taught in these schools, calculation of the most intricate kind was worked out with ease and within a few seconds.<sup>13</sup> Children were taught to read and write in *Mahajani* which was known by various names, such as *Landa*, *Sarafi* and *Thakri*. *Nagri*, commonly called Hindi, was also taught. *Landa* was a sort of short-hand of *Nagri* and was called 'tailless', because having generally been written without vowels.<sup>14</sup> *Lande* of one district, if not of all the districts or cities or towns, differed from that of another.<sup>15</sup> *Mahajani*, was in fact, the script of *Mahajans* or merchants, *Lande* of shopkeepers and *Sarafi* of *Sarafs* or Bankers. One and all got occasionally confounded with one another and also with Hindi. In the Punjab, Hindi was generally used to denote the *Nagri* character.<sup>16</sup> The range of instruction was very limited. The students worked out sums mentally and without the aid of slates or any other writing material, with wonderful rapidity.<sup>17</sup> Mental arithmetic, multiplication tables and bazar accounts were taught.<sup>18</sup> To learn how to calculate mentally and to keep business correspondence called *Bahi-khatas*, was no mean accomplishment, while reciting the alphabet with short sentences, sometimes, in verse, containing lessons on morality and prudence, impressed deeply upon the youthful intellect. The method of teaching was very primitive. The younger boys acquired the knowledge of Arithmetic with a finger which served the purpose of a pencil or pen and the ground served as a slate.<sup>19</sup>

The *Nagri* and Sanskrit schools too were called *Pathshalas*. These *Pathshalas* were generally attached to the temples, called *Shivalas* or *Thakur Dwaras*.<sup>20</sup> The teacher was called *Pandha* or *Pandit*. The *Brahmin* boys mostly attended these schools in order to follow the priestly or teaching profession of their ancestors.<sup>21</sup>

12. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

14. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 406, *Distt. Gazetteer, Dera Ghazi Khan, 1883-84*, p. 101.

15. Leitner, *op. cit.*, Vol. II (Introduction).

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

18. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 134.

19. *Settlement Report, Ludhiana District, 1853*, p. 159.

20. Leitner, *op. cit.*, pp. 113, 136.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 43, 82, 114.

In typical *Pathshalas*, a pupil began either with *Nagri* or *Gurmukhi* and then proceeded to learn Sanskrit, the vernacular being generally Punjabi. Having studied readers, he took up Sanskrit, Grammar, Poetry, History, *Jyotish* (Astrology), *Vedant* (Philosophy), *Nyaya* (Logic), religious books dealing with religious rites and finished with *Vaidyak* or Hindu system of medicine.<sup>22</sup>

The more common practice was to do one or two subjects with one *Pandit* and the remaining with others who had specialised in them. The eminent teachers perfect in their subjects, adopted the names of *Chandrika Niyyak* etc. as their most honourable titles.<sup>23</sup>

Teaching of Law and Philosophy to non *Brahmin* Hindus met with opposition from some of the best *Pandits*, these being professional caste-subjects of study which ensured Brahminical ascendancy over the rest of the communities.<sup>24</sup> As for Grammar, Rhetoric, Drama, and other secular subjects, each and everybody was allowed to study them.<sup>25</sup>

Most of the higher subjects in Sanskrit were taught at the houses of the teachers. The Punjabi *Pandits* were known throughout India for their mastery over certain subjects, such as *Viyakaran*, *Nayaya Dharamshastra*, *Vedant* and *Sidhant*.<sup>26</sup> Rulia Ram was a great scholar of Sanskrit and *Nagri*. In the Arabic schools, Arabic occupied the same position as Latin and Greek in the schools and colleges of Europe.<sup>27</sup> Among Muslims, great stress was laid upon education and to receive and impart it was a part of their religious duty. Their education started with the study of Arabic in which holy *Quran* is written.

The primary education in Arabic started in a Quranic school. A Quranic school was attached to a mosque, found in every Muslim village.<sup>28</sup> There were innumerable Quranic schools in the private houses of *Maulvis*. The widows often taught the holy *Quran* to small boys and girls. A teacher working in a Quranic school was termed as *Hafiz* or *Maulvi*.<sup>29</sup>

The primary education of a Muslim was confined to learning parts

22. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.* (Introduction), pp. 79, 134.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 82.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

28. *District Gazetteer, Hazara*, 1883-84, p. 62 ; *District Gazetteer, Shahpur*, 1883-84, p. 43 ; *District Gazetteer, Peshawar*, 1897-98, pp. 105-6.

29. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 69.



of the *Quran* by rote, no attempt being made to understand them.<sup>30</sup> The child was taught those *Suras* of the *Quran* which begin with the seventy eighth to the end of the volume, and which were probably all given at Mecca, thus following the proper chronological order causing the *Suras* delivered at Mecca precede those of Madina.<sup>31</sup>

The Quranic schools imparted religious knowledge which was essential for every Muslim and which was more intelligible when Arabic was spoken.<sup>32</sup> These schools also taught the two Rs. i.e. reading and writing.<sup>33</sup> Many schools added Persian, Urdu and Arithmetic to their courses of study.<sup>34</sup> The typical high education consisted of reading the *Quran* and its appended traditions in Arabic, and learning their meaning to a certain extent.<sup>35</sup> The higher studies consisted of Grammar, Logic, Mohamman Law, *Hadis*,<sup>36</sup> *Tafsir*,<sup>37</sup> Literature, Philosophy and Rhetoric. The standard of teaching was very high. The exegesis of religion was taught in the most admirable way. Classes in Arabic were chiefly, though not exclusively, attended by the Muslims. Persian and other subjects were indiscriminately studied by pupils from all communities.<sup>38</sup>

An Arabic School of import was situated at Lahore, which prepared students for the office of *Hafiz*. The students learnt the holy *Quran* by heart. The services of a *Hafiz* were preferentially sought for filling a vacancy of a priest or guide of prayers at a mosque.<sup>39</sup>

Three Faqir brothers, Aziz-ud-Din, Nur-ud-Din and Imam-ud-Din ran a school in the Lal Masjid at Lahore. Education was given in all branches of learning but Persian and Arabic were the subjects on which great stress was laid. Hundreds of students received education. The deserving students were provided with free boarding and lodging, in addition to books.<sup>40</sup>

The eloquence of Persian attracted most of the courts and offices of Asia just as French was, for long, the universal language of

30. *Punjab Administration Report*, 1849-51, p. 143; Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

31. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

32. *Ibid*, pp. 67-68.

33. *Ibid*.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 116.

35. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

36. Narration, narrative, story, history and traditions.

37. Explanation.

38. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

40. Latif, S.M., *Lahore—its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (Lahore, 1892), pp. 338-39.

diplomats in Europe.<sup>41</sup> Persian made one a gentleman and Arabic a scholar.<sup>42</sup> In the Punjab, Persian was taught on three grounds. In the first place, Persian was the court language of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Secondly, only Persian knowing men got jobs. The Hindus, especially the Khatris, whose forefathers' profession was service, eagerly frequented Persian schools. The reason for this was that they learnt what gave them riches and official power. Thirdly, Persian was given importance because most of the religious books of the Hindus had been translated into Persian and subsequently into Punjabi.<sup>43</sup>

There were innumerable Persian schools where Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs received their education.<sup>44</sup> Sometimes, a Persian teacher taught in his own house or in a rented house. A teacher of Persian was called *Maulvi*. The boys were taught at first to learn certain Persian books by rote without any regard to meaning. Afterwards, they went through these books a second time and were then taught to translate them, word for word, into vernacular but there was no attempt at explanation.<sup>45</sup> The Persian schools, viz., Mian Sahib ka Madrasa at Batala, of Maulvi Shaikh Ahmad at Sialkot and of Mian Faiz at Gujranwala, existed then.<sup>46</sup>

In several villages of the Punjab, there were schools which opened when agricultural work was slack and closed when the help of the boys was required by their parents or guardians in fields.<sup>47</sup> There was no regular system of charging fee, since imposition of regular fee was looked upon highly derogatory.<sup>48</sup>

Though uneducated himself, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was always very anxious to promote education throughout his empire. Strange it is that he encouraged the study of English among his subjects. In 1834, he proposed that one Gujjar Singh, brother of Lehna Singh Majithia, should be sent to England to learn English. The Maharaja made arrangements for teaching of English to his son, Sher Singh. The Maharaja made a move for starting an English school at

---

41. Leitner, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, Vol. II (Introduction).

45. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 74.



Lahore.<sup>49</sup> For this purpose, he invited Rev. John C. Lowrie, the reputed teacher of Ludhiana Missionary School.<sup>50</sup> To the great disliking of the Maharaja, Mr Lowrie insisted on teaching the *Bible*, and the proposal was consequently given up.

The importance of English language increased more and more with the establishment of firm and friendly relations between the Government of Lahore and the Company's Government. Learning of English became popular with princes and sons of chiefs. Maharaja Dalip Singh was taught English.<sup>51</sup> John Lawrence, Commissioner and Superintendent of Jullundur, on duty at Lahore, in his letter dated 28th August, 1847 addressed to H. M. Elliot, Secretary to Government of India, wrote, "This morning on my saluting him (Dalip Singh) when entering the Darbar, to my surprise and the delight of his attendants, he bade 'Good Morning' very distinctly in English. On my expressing admiration at his progress in the language, I was informed that His Highness had resolved to learn English."<sup>52</sup>

Thus, it is safely inferred that the foundation of Western education, to some extent, was laid in the Punjab by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Had he lived longer, he might have spread a net-work of schools with English as one of the subjects. His idea of sending a Sikh chief to England for higher education was indeed very novel. What he thought was put into action when the British occupied the whole of the Punjab and English education became current.

Besides the teaching of *Gurmukhi*, *Nagri*, Arabic, Persian and English, there were other subjects of study which were gaining popularity in the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Astrology was one of them. It was a subject of study for advanced students in Sanskrit and was studied chiefly by the *Brahmins*. One who was an astrologer, was called *Jyotshi*. The study of astrology was not so much valued among the Sikhs as among the Hindus.<sup>53</sup> Similar was the case with the Muslims. An astrologer kept an account of lucky and unlucky days for all sorts of operations. The Hindus consulted him on the occasion of marriage and acted according to his advice. He also prepared an almanac every year for the general guidance of the public and also prepared

49. *District Gazetteer, Ludhiana*, 1888-89, pp. 74-5.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Foreign Deptt., Secret Consultations*, 30th Oct., 1847, Nos. 81-85.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Leitner, op. cit.*, p. 35.

horoscope called *Janam Patri* for children.<sup>54</sup> Many eked out their living by adopting Astrology as their profession.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a great faith in Astrology and the most famous astrologer of his times was Pandit Madhusudan. The other famous Astrologers were Lala Balu Ram and Lala Dilpat Rai.<sup>55</sup>

Astronomy was another subject of teaching. But no school had a telescope to teach Astronomy. Maharaja Ranjit Singh is said to have a type of telescope and used it to view the movements of his troops.

Besides learning other subjects, Punjabis were also fond of poetry. In every part of the Punjab, there existed a type of literature in the form of poetry which was usually remembered by heart and occasionally brought to writing in Persian and other languages. The compositions for the most part consisted of songs in praise of God, love-songs and lullabies which the women sang.<sup>56</sup> On occasions of domestic festivity or sorrow, the women poured forth their stores of traditional songs.<sup>57</sup> The songs and the ballads recited at weddings and other festive occasions by *Mirasis* and *Bhattis* were, in reality, the favourite of the day.<sup>58</sup>

People used to sing the verses of favourite Punjabi poets unknown to print but living in the hearts of people. Indeed, the taste for poetry, chiefly Punjabi and Persian, was the resource of a prosaic life.

The Balauchis, like the Punjabis, were passionately fond of poetry, consisting chiefly of ballads, describing the events of national or tribal history and of love songs and local poets were common among them.<sup>59</sup> The poets were held in high esteem by the Maharaja who used to pay them liberally. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din was the most eloquent and eminent poet of his times. His performance ranked high and the verses composed by him were characterised by simplicity and elegance.<sup>60</sup>

Calligraphy in Persian and Arabic was of an excellent standard. Mian Pir Baksh Koftgar,<sup>61</sup> was an eminent Persian calligraphist. He

---

54. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

56. *District Gazetteer, Mianwali*, 1883-84, p. 58.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

58. *Ibid.*

59. Ibbetson, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

60. Latif, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-9.

61. A gold-beater.



was held in high veneration by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his nobles. Those anxious for the instruction in calligraphy resorted to his residence, it being below his dignity to go to others' house to impart instructions. He gave instructions in calligraphy in the name of God. The Maharaja did his best to employ him but he rejected the offer outright. Mir Bagir Khan and Mir Amanat Khan were celebrated calligraphists of Persian at Lahore. In the service of Sheikh Immad-ud-Din Khan, once Governor of Jullundur Doab, was Mirza Imman Vardi of Kabul who was famous throughout India for his skill in calligraphy in Persian.

Female education was prevalent among the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims in all parts of the Punjab. Though, the number of educated women was not very large yet the very existence of female education, almost unknown in other parts of India, during those days, was indeed a matter of great appreciation.<sup>62</sup> Proper arrangements were made to educate the girls on an equal footing with the boys. The knowledge of religious duties imparted in numerous treatises and in some of the texts was illustrated by stories of deities, saints, gurus and prophets. It was deemed to be sufficient for one who had to learn the household duties which, besides cooking and serving, included the arts of sewing, embroidery and keeping of accounts.<sup>63</sup>

A Punjabi woman received education as far as it was possible for her and the knowledge, she acquired, was gladly and readily extended to others. She became the educator of many.<sup>64</sup> The wives of *Maulvis* and *Bhais* were taught, if not already educated, by their husbands as they, in turn, instructed their children in reading, writing and religious duties upto a certain age.<sup>65</sup> The wives of respectable Muslims were almost educated ladies. Among certain Muslim families, there were poetesses who could compose fine poems in Urdu and Persian. There were many schools for the education of Sikh women in the districts situated between the Chenab and the Attock.

The foregoing analysis of the state of education during the kingdom of Lahore, reveals that the Maharaja patronised scholars of all castes and creeds and gave grants to schools for the support and maintenance of pupils and teachers.

62. *Punjab Administration Report, 1849-51*, p. 143.

63. *Leitner, op. cit.*, p. 98.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-8.

65. *Ibid.* (Introduction).

## Foreginers at the Sikh Court

Devinder Kumar Verma\*

Several outsiders came from far and near to seek fortune in the sovereign state of the Punjab. They were of various nationalities like French, Italians, Spaniards, Hungarians, Greeks, Britishers and Americans.

In the beginning, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was distrustful of the foreigners but later on his attitude changed. A submissive and judicious letter from Allard and Ventura removed the apprehensions of the Maharaja, and he, with the spirit and originality of a genius, admitted them into his service. The management of these gentlemen speedily removed Ranjit Singh's prejudices against the Europeans; and the door to employment was thrown open in the service of the Maharaja.<sup>1</sup>

Recruitment of the foreigners in the service of the Maharaja was regarded, at a time by the nobles, as an undesirable intrusion. As late as 1826, some chiefs refused to serve under Ventura and Allard and threatened to resist them by force. However, in due course of time somewhat friendly relations were established between the European officers and the Sikh chiefs and the former continued joining the Sikh court without any sort of difficulty.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh employed some European officers of considerable note who had fought in the Napoleonic wars. Most of these European officers enjoyed the confidence of the Maharaja. The Maharaja is reported to have said, "I have great expectations that Ventura, Allard, Avitabile and Court would not spare anything in sacrificing their lives and proving true to my salt in the hour of need."<sup>2</sup>

Primarily the European officers were expected to have specialised knowledge of warfare. Ranjit Singh himself being passionately fond of

---

\*Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Steinback, *The Punjaub* (London, 1846), p. 62.

2. Suri, Sohan Lal (trans. V.S. Suri), *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Vol. III (New Delhi, 1961), p. 491.



the military profession, had chiefly devoted his attention to the organisation of his army.

One cannot help admiring the degree of perfection which Ventura brought in the infantry of the Maharaja's army.<sup>3</sup> *Fauj-i-Khas* or model brigade under him was a show-piece of the Maharaja's army, well dressed, well armed and well equipped.<sup>4</sup>

Allard gave a degree of precision to the Khalsa cavalry, a part of which was organised on European model. He reorganised the cavalry of the Maharaja. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's appreciation for his work is confirmed by the fact that when Allard wanted to go to France, Maharaja Ranjit Singh wished that he should not leave Lahore. The Maharaja put up a long resistance to the plan of his favourite officer saying, "at least leave your children with me; I will then be sure that you will come to get them." "My children? But it is for them that I am going to France! Because it's only in France that they can be brought up according to the custom of their worship and the wish of their religion", replied Allard. On these words, the Maharaja did not resist any more, saying, "since you speak of religion, I have nothing more to oppose your desire. It is a matter of conscience; every one is free to follow the religion which suits him and it is his duty to obey its commandments. You can go."<sup>5</sup> Allard was exceptionally in the good books of the Maharaja, who on account of his excellent work and behaviour presented him with a Persian sword, for the blade of which the Maharaja paid a sum of rupees 5,000, the hilt being gold-studded with jewels.<sup>6</sup>

Court had brought Ranjit Singh's artillery and musketry to great perfection so that it could match those of the company.<sup>7</sup> He had cast shells in pewter and brass. The achievements of Court were in the training of artillery men, the organisation of batteries and the establishment of arsenals to ensure the plentiful supply of all the materials which the armies of Europe were using.<sup>8</sup>

The Maharaja was greatly impressed by the European discipline and the ability of the commanders. Fauja Singh observes in this

3. Hasrat, B. J., *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh* (Hoshiarpur, 1977), p. 321.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Lafont, Jean Marie, 'Bannou Pan Dei Allard and the Family of General Allard', *The Panjab Past and Present* (April, 1981), pp. 39-40.

6. Sinha, N. K., *Ranjit Singh* (Calcutta, 1945), pp. 157-58.

7. Fane, H. E., *Five Years in India, 1835-39*, Vol. I (London, 1842), p. 161.

8. Chopra, G. L., *The Punjab as a Sovereign State* (Lahore, 1928), p. 185.

connection :

Command was far from perfect even in the times of the great Maharaja. The inferior quality of the commanders posed more or less a permanent challenge which the Maharaja endeavoured to meet by appointing foreigners and giving special training to the sons and relatives of his Sardars.<sup>9</sup>

Europeans like Ventura, Allard and Court participated in a number of campaigns which the Maharaja undertook in different directions, such as, Jasrota, Kangra, Peshawar, Kulu and Mandi.

Some critics, however, opine that it was a mistake on the part of the Maharaja to have employed Europeans and to have reorganised his cavalry on western lines. They argue that the major and important conquests of Maharaja Ranjit Singh except Peshawar were made by his army not trained on western lines. Secondly, the trained army became in the end an intolerable burden which overwhelmed the civil authorities and brought about not only its own ruin but also that of the State. Thirdly, most of the European officers employed by the Maharaja proved disloyal. But this criticism does not seem to be valid. There is no denying the fact that the reorganised army of the Maharaja towards the end of his reign was far better than the earlier period and the credit for this goes, in no small measure, to his efficient European officers. It was this army which had offered tough resistance to the British during the two Anglo-Sikh Wars, so much so that the enemies of the Sikhs were highly appreciative of its efficiency and effectiveness. Malleson observes that western discipline brought the rank and file of Sikh army under the training of the skilled officers.<sup>10</sup>

No doubt, the foreigners at the court of the Maharaja and his successors were primarily employed for warfare purposes but some of them proved useful in other spheres also. Avitabile was appointed as the Governor of Wazirabad and the adjoining territories.<sup>11</sup> He proved himself an able officer and improved the administration of the frontier considerably. The Maharaja considered him, indeed a unique person in the settlement of the affairs of the country which had certainly prospered under him. He improved the face of the town considerably to the astonishment of the inhabitants. The village records of Wazirabad under the General, showing the instalments of revenue paid and

---

9. *Military System of the Sikhs* (Delhi, 1964), p. 352.

10. Malleson, G. B., *Decisive Battles of India from 1746 to 1849 inclusive* (London, 1888), pp. 366-67.

11. Wolf, *The Travels and Adventures of the Rev. Joseph Wolf* (London, 1861), p. 372.



other detail, were praised by the early British administrators.<sup>12</sup> Avitabile proved himself useful in the disturbed areas of Peshawar as well. Honigberger was a medical man and the Maharaja had great faith in him. With his treatment, the Maharaja recovered from a serious attack of illness. Dr Harlan was the Governor of Gujrat. He could not prove himself a very successful administrator.

Most of the foreigners kept beards, abstained from eating beef and smoking. Most of them understood Punjabi. They participated in the social gatherings and festivals, and attended marriages of the nobles. Thus, they accustomed themselves to the life of the Punjab where they had settled with their families to serve the Maharaja and his successors.

---

12. Diary of R.G. Taylor, Punjab Government Records (1847-49), Vol. VI, pp. 7, 21, cited in Indu Banga's *Agrarian System of the Sikhs* (Delhi, 1978), p. 90.

## **Trade and Commerce as Factors Influencing the Relations between the British Indian Government and the Lahore Durbar : 1830-1838**

**M. L. Ahluwalia\***

Trade and commerce has always been an important factor in determining the inter-state relations, because very often the commercial interdependence between states cannot be done away with merely on account of political divisions. It is intended to study this aspect in respect of the relations forged between the British Indian Government and the Lahore Durbar in particular during one decade of the nineteenth century with regard to joint trade ventures along the region of the river Indus leading ultimately to the signing of the Tripple Alliance between these two governments and the ex-Amir of Afghanistan, Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk in 1838. There is a sizeable source material on this aspect in the various record series of the British Government preserved in the National Archives of India, the India Office Library in London, the Public Records Office, London and also in the Uzbek Archives at Tashkent and the Foreign Office Archives of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow besides the other contemporary writings.<sup>1</sup>

It may, however, be noted here that what was made to look as a specially designed programme by the British authorities to forge a thrust into the region of the Khannates of Bokhara, Khiva and Yarkand with a view to counter the designs of the Czarist Russia on these Khannates, was nothing but the realisation of the potency of traditional interdependence of the governments and people of this region as also of the entire Central Asia and India on the merchandize and products of each one of them by the others.

This case study is, therefore, meant to focus attention on the importance of trade and commerce both as weapons of political strategy

---

\*Formerly Deputy Director, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

1. The writer had taken note of this material in U.S.S.R. while on the Cultural Exchange Mission to that country in 1978.



as also a necessity in a particular geographical and geo-political setting.

The scene was set like this. By 1828 Great Britain having extricated herself from the obligations of supporting Persia (present Iran) under all circumstances, as envisaged by the treaty of Turkomanchai found herself lodged in a more embarrassing situation in this region by making the Persian Emperor, Fateh Ali Shah, to lean more heavily on the Russian support. On the other hand and for similar reasons, the British could not support Amir Dost Mohammad Khan of Kabul in his anti-Persian and anti-Ranjit Singh policies. In the meantime reports started coming about the increase of the commercial hold of Russia over the Khannates of Bokhara, Khiva and Yarkand as a weapon to secure political designs. The Chinese authorities had also started a vigorous campaign to maintain their hold on this region, particularly Yarkand, as an outlet for the trade of Tibet.

The British authorities accordingly decided to launch a counter offensive in that direction through underselling of Russian and Chinese goods. But this could only be done by managing to send the British-made merchandize and the manufactures of British India through the Indian sub-continent via Herat, Kandhar, Bamian and Bokhara routes through which the entire trade and commerce of the region had been going on for centuries. In order to achieve this purpose the British authorities in India were to secure for their merchandize a safe and secure passage from across the territories then held by the Amirs of Sindh and Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the sub-continent and Dost Mohammad Khan, the Amir of Kabul. This plan was explained to the Governor-General in India in the Secret Despatch dated 17th February, 1830,<sup>2</sup> stating, "our present view is directed to the promotion of commerce with the countries in the vicinity of the Punjaub, and especially with those on the north and west of the principal branch of the river Indus, including particularly the territories subject to the government of the King of Cabul ... the description of merchandize which appears to be in demand in these countries are silk and cotton piece goods, Europe's broad cloth, iron, lead, Bengal raw silk and sugar to which may be added cutlery, ironmongery nails, British cotton-twist and also a small assortment of the low priced watches and some tea." The

- 
2. In the first two despatches concerning this issue dated 19th December, 1829 and 12th January, 1830, the Governor General was generally told about the reports coming from various sides about the planned expansion of Russia's control over the region of the Khannates through the agency of Russian traders and the spy activities of the Russians mostly through German agents and the consequent need for vigilance.

Governor General was advised to provide most of the above mentioned articles from India itself through the Board of Trade for a total sum of £5,000 and their supply to their destined markets was to be made through the Bombay Presidency with the help of traders already established in the local markets so as not to arouse suspicion of the native chiefs and population about the ulterior political designs of the Company. The Board of Control of the Company had already decided to lead a political mission to these countries in the guise of a merchant, and Alexander Burnes was selected to lead this mission, travelling from Bombay to the Court of the Amir of Sindh and from there to the Court of Ranjit Singh and then to Kabul and onwards. Burnes and his assistants Lockey and Leach belonged to the Survey Department and had already completed the surveys on the Gujrat side. He was enjoined to survey the river Indus and the territories enroute in order to ascertain whether Indus and other rivers on that side were good enough to carry steam boats on which British merchandize could be directly exported from Bombay with a view to cut the overhead costs of transporting goods through longer land routes. It was also decided that the Amirs of Sindh should be forced if necessary, to cooperate with the British venture, while Maharaja Ranjit Singh should be placated by a gift of horses and a British carriage to be presented on behalf of the British Government. In order to achieve this purpose, the British Indian authorities had to tackle two independent sovereign powers, the Lahore Durbar and Afghanistan as they commanded the traditional land routes of commerce and trade to the Khannates. British goods could be made to reach this region only through these land routes. It was also intended to use the cover of private channels of trade and commerce for this purpose. This was not an easy task as the intervening powers viz. Dost Mohammad Khan, the Amir of Afghanistan and Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore, were not on friendly terms. Dost Mohammad Khan was also not on good terms with the rulers of Persia, viz. modern Iran, as both had been staking their claim on the province of Herat, a proverbial bone of contention between Iran and Afghanistan.

On his own part, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was apprehensive that the free flow of goods of European industry will easily ease out the traditional artisans and goods manufactured by them.

Actually, Ranjit Singh was quite alive to this situation ever since he came to power. Therefore, after signing with the British Indian Government in 1809 the treaty of amity and friendship by which the respective boundaries of the two states were earmarked along the route of the river Sutlej, Ranjit Singh hastened to extend his control on his



side from Kangra and Kulu down to Bahawalpur and Multan in the first phase. During the second phase of his conquests, Ranjit Singh secured the trade routes along the entire Indus-Sutlej course from Mithankot to Kalabagh through Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan. The extension of Ranjit Singh's authority over the Mandi, Kangra and Kulu regions and further north in Ladakh by 1830-34 enabled him to secure most of the supplies of sulphur, iron ore, borax, etc. for his defence requirements. In this context, the clash of interests between Lahore Durbar and the British Indian authorities for monopolizing the supplies of raw wool from Tibet during the twenties of the nineteenth century by itself forms an interesting chapter. His experience in the northern sector of his empire was enough to make the Maharaja all the more cautious in regard to the policy then being adopted by the British Indian Government for reaching a political understanding with the Maharaja's government for launching their offensive against the Czarist Russia's politics in the region of the Khannates. The Maharaja, therefore, had made up his mind to extract the maximum benefit from the situation and get his claims over Shikarpur on the one side and on the entire trans-Indus region towards Kalabagh and upto the Khyber recognised by the British. He had simultaneously encouraged the ex-Amir of Afghanistan, Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk to launch an offensive against Dost Mohammad Khan, with the aid and assistance of the Maharaja as a lasting solution to the danger then posed by Dost Mohammad Khan. The Maharaja was fully aware that his own interests lay in keeping the British Government in India not only in good humour but firmly on his side, particularly in view of the constant threat posed by Amir Dost Mohammad Khan to the trans-Indus dominions of Lahore Durbar. Accordingly, the proceedings of the Burnes' Mission at the Court of the Maharaja, the holding of the meeting between him and Governor General, Bentinck at Ropar during the same year and the simultaneous negotiations between the Maharaja and Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk have to be studied together as the background to the treaties for the joint navigation of the river Indus by the principal parties, viz. the British Government in India, the Lahore Durbar and the Governments of Bahawalpur and Sindh. These treaties were finalized in 1832.<sup>3</sup>

3. Captain C. M. Wade, then Political Agent on behalf of the British Indian Government, was already present at Lahore when Burnes and his party arrived here with presents on 18th July, 1831. The Maharaja gave the Mission an audience on 20th July. The Mission remained with Ranjit Singh till the end of October 1831. *Umdat-ul-Tawarikh*, Daftar III, Part I (English translation by V. S. Suri), pp. 86-103.

It may be stated here that as a result of uncertain political conditions prevailing in Herat and Kandhar, the supplies of goods from India through the Shikarpur-Indus land routes to Afghanistan and the region of the Khannates had practically come to a stand still. This was an excellent opportunity for the traders of Russia. According to one estimate the annual turnover of trade of Russian merchandize to Bokhara alone was in the neighbourhood of 8 millions. Of the two famous land routes, that of Kandhar-Herat was then under Dost Mohammad Khan, the Amir of Afghanistan, while the other, viz. of Peshawar, Bamian and Balkh was under the control of both Dost Mohammad Khan and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>4</sup>

The supplementary treaty for the navigation of the Indus, dated 20th December, 1832 signed between the British and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, however, proved to be a non-starter almost till 1835. Even the rates of tolls to be levied on the British and British Indian merchandize had not been settled by that time between Lahore Durbar and the British Indian Government. Commenting on this situation, the Board of Control in their secret despatch to the Governor General in India dated 7th March, 1835, suggested :

Firstly, "that if Runjeet Singh should view the increase of Dost Muhammad's power with jealousy, and not content with preserving and attempts to extend his footing on the right bank of the Indus ; the contest which would ensue would involve consequences of much interest to the British Government in India." Secondly, "should Runjeet Singh add Afghanistan to his dominions he could increase his military power in a very great degree and occupy a position from which he could at once threaten every part of our frontier from the Sutlej to the Cutch (Kutch). His position alone would require on our part an increase of military force which would be ruinous to our embarrassed finances."

The Board, therefore, proposed an alternative of encouraging a person subservient to the British to consolidate his power in the whole of Afghanistan including the provinces of Kandhar and Herat, but not allow that person's claim over the Amirs of Sind. Like-wise the nominal power of the Amirs of Sind should also be secured from Ranjit Singh's designs which were then fully known. But the British

4. For details, see Lt. Conolly's reports on the bright prospects of re-opening of trade to this region through the two traditional land routes of Shikarpur-Kandhar and Herat and Peshawar-Kabul-Bamian-Balkh and Bokhara. *Sec. Cons. No. 3*, dated 25th November, 1831; *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, pp. 480-89.



could not afford to antagonise Ranjit Singh at that crucial time. The Board, therefore, categorically suggested that, "it is our political interest that the Indus and its tributary streams should not belong to one state. The division of power on the Indus between the Sindies, the Afghans and the Sikhs is probably the arrangement most calculated to secure us against a hostile use of that river; while it will not probably pose any real obstacle to the navigation of the river for commercial purpose which should be secured by treaty."<sup>5</sup> This policy decision was implemented in two parts. Firstly, by forcing in 1835, separate treaties of commerce and trade on Ranjit Singh and the Amirs of Sind so as to permit the British to use the Indus and its tributaries for commercial navigation. Ranjit Singh opted to remain more or less a passive partner as he feared that Sind going completely under the British was as dangerous to his own security as its going under any Afghan ruler. The British, therefore, worked cautiously but at the same time would not permit Ranjit Singh to harm the Amirs of Sind either. The British Governor General, therefore, exerted the maximum pressure on Ranjit Singh through his Political Agent, Captain C. M. Wade, that the latter agreed not to use force against the Amirs of Sind for the settlements of his claim on Shikarpur. On this success the Board of Control congratulated their Governor General in the Court's despatch No. 36, dated 31st May, 1838 saying that the tendency of a war on the Indus to defeat the purposes of the treaties for opening the navigation of that river had been thus halted. However, since Ranjit Singh was practically forced to withdraw his troops even from embarking upon the settlement of the lawless tribes of Mazzaries and Bhugties, interrupting trade, the Governor General was advised to accept Ranjit Singh's face-saving design to do so on the Amirs accepting some type of claim of the former on Shikarpur. This was to be achieved by encouraging the Amirs of Sind and Ranjit Singh to hold joint fairs at Thatta or Shikarpur, and at Mithankot on the model of the fairs being then organised by the British merchants on the frontiers of Russian Empire in Central Asia. It was suggested that in these joint fairs at Thatta or Shikarpur and at Mithankot, the traders from India (under British control) on the one hand and those from West Asia be allowed to transact business. The British Governor General in India was to secure

- 
5. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had all along been insisting on fixed duties on import and export of merchandize from British India because merchants of British India were in the habit of misusing the trade facilities by under-declaring their merchandize and also by fake permits.

this aim through the agency of Alexander Burnes, then on a political mission to the Amir of Kabul, for the advancement of the scheme of holding joint fairs. Ranjit Singh's pacification in this behalf was obtained also by relenting of pressure on him in the Ladakh-Kulu frontiers. Ahmad Shah, the ex-ruler of Iskardo, who was making feverish appeals to the British for allowing him sanctuary in the British Indian Provinces or allowing him to recruit soldiers for his army from there was refused permission for either. The same attitude was adopted by the British towards the Raja of Bilaspur who was also then seeking British support against the Lahore Durbar.<sup>6</sup>

Ranjit Singh's aim on Rojhans, the seat of the Mazzari Chief, was also due to its strategic importance for the safe conveyance of trade to Dera Ghazi Khan and Shujahabad which were in his dominion.

Mohan Lal Kashmiri in his secret reports to the British Government mentions that Rojhans is larger than Asni and its bazars broader than those of Mithankot. There are about 100 shops occupied by Hindu merchants. The trade under the protection of the ruler of (Mazzaris), Dera Ghazi Khan and Shujahabad are its principal parts. The former supplies it with common cloth and the latter with sugar which are plentifully consumed in this country. The caravans leaving Amarkot on the left bank proceed straight to Rojhans passing through Kotla Shah, where they are provided with guards for protection on the road. The duty on cotton cloth is one anna (old currency rates during the British days). There are eight ferries between Dradildar and Madhari, the area inhabited by the Mazzari tribes. These ferries were available at Mori, Dapela, Kenmiani, Shah Ali, Kishmer, Gheelpur and Badhuri. One or two boats are provided at each of these places. From this place three caravan routes lead to Kandhar. Merchants on this entire route are given protection by the Balouchis under the influence of the local Syiad chiefs who represent the famous saint Syiad Hassan Shah.<sup>7</sup>

Mohan Lal recounts that when a caravan is conducted in safety through the area under the guard of a Syiad, the camel men would sing a praise to Hazrat Muhammad and the Syiad which is as follows :

- 
6. Political Despatch from the Governor-General to the Court of Directors in London, No. 33, dated 28th November, 1836.
  7. Mohan Lal recounts that he had arranged with a local Syiad to escort him safely to Amarkot and settled to pay him Rs. 200. But when he arrived at Amarkot, the Agent there on behalf of Lahore Durbar instigated the Syiad by telling him that Mohan Lal was a British Agent and was in a position to pay any amount up to Rs. 10,000. *Pol. Cons.* No. 7, dated 5th Sept., 1836.



Noor to Hszoza Nabiji haq Parwar Khalag Ze  
 He Zamin-o-Asman Junbah Jehan to Kanthe ze !  
 Ado Karam Qadir Quraishi Sunde zo.  
 Ado Sharaf shafi Nabi to Sun de zo.

On hearing these utterances, the local villagers, who would otherwise rob the strangers, would rush to kiss the feet of the Syyad and the old men who could not reach the noble person would prostrate at a distance to implore his blessings.<sup>8</sup>

Due to the strategic commercial importance of this route, the British as a matter of policy wanted to retain the region virtually under their control, but nominally under the Amirs of Sind. Therefore a good deal of pressure was exerted on Ranjit Singh to agree to the mediation of the British power in respect of his grievances against the Amirs of Sind over the question of the depredations of the Mazzari tribesmen.

The British Governor General Lord Auckland's *Kharitta* addressed to Ranjit Singh dated Calcutta 2nd January, 1837 openly conveys a claim of the British to mediate as superior power. The *Kharitta* opens with a non-formal manner of addressing Ranjit Singh, as "My honoured and valued friend." But the very opening para was loaded with the tone of superior authority to say, "the great satisfaction I experienced at learning that you had cheerfully acceded to my advice with regard to your meditated advance towards the dominions of the Ameers of Sciende...the only motive for the intervention of the British government was the preservation of peace ..whereby the objects of commerce and civilization which the British contemplated in opening the navigation of the Indus might most expeditiously and most effectually be accomplished."<sup>9</sup>

On 24th April, 1837, Auckland again wrote a personal letter to Ranjit Singh, saying that the British will "ensure the satisfactory adjustment of any differences yet remaining regarding the Mazaree in the manner which may be most acceptable to your Highness...after Mackeson shall have instituted enquiries on the spot."<sup>10</sup> Ranjit Singh

8. This was witnessed by Mohan Lal whose caravan was conducted by Syyad Shah Baz Ali Shah son of Syyad Lal Shah.

9. *For. Dept. Aucklands' Correspondence with Native Powers* ; See also *Secret Cons.* dated 6th March, 1837, Nos. 13-20.

10. Auckland in his secret despatch dated 21st Feb., 1838 to the Secret Committee in London had explained in detail the reasons for advising Capt. Wade to adopt a most conciliatory tone towards His Highness and by no means to urge him

[Continued on page 111]

insisted that the Amirs of Sind should be made his "malguzars".<sup>11</sup>

At this stage Mr Mackeson had sent an intelligence report to Capt. C.M. Wade in his letter from Camp Shekhwan dated 11th Feb., 1838 that a Russian Envoy Capt. Vicowitch (or his agent) was proceeding to the Court of the Maharaja where he was likely to be given a good reception. He, therefore, advised that the Maharaja be persuaded not to do so with the enemies of the British.

Since Ranjit Singh was finding himself completely thwarted in the settlement of the Mazzari issue independently of the British power, the British tried to soothe his injured pride by side tracking the issue and involving him in a type of joint commercial venture with East India Company on the Indus. For this Auckland again wrote to him a personal letter dated 22nd May, 1837. In this letter Auckland wrote, "His Excellency (the C-in-C) informs me that you are about to afford a practical illustration of your sense of these advantages (of commerce) by sending an investment down the Indus partly, at your own cost."

C.M. Wade writing to the Governor General on this issue stated that "an impression has also long prevailed among the Sikhs and the Afghans that Russia is a more powerful nation than Great Britain. That she is ambitious of extending her dominion to India and that she has only to show herself on the frontier of the Indus to shake the power of the British Government in the East to its foundations, that the British should adopt with Ranjit Singh the same attitude as adopted with the Amir of Kabul. This should be made explicit to the Maharaja."<sup>12</sup> But the Governor General disagreed with this suggestion.

Sir Henry Fane, the British C-in-C who had been in Punjab for attending the marriage of Prince Nau Nihal Singh, the grandson of Ranjit Singh told him thus, "I have little doubt that this example will give an impetus to commercial adventure and that under the enlightened administration of your Highness the Sikh nation will attain to that

---

*Continued from page 110]*

to the adoption of any measure which might show undue preference to the interest of the Amecrs of Sind....as the latter was following a policy of "balance of Power" while the British were "beginning to prescribe limits to his power." His utility as a strong buffer between Afghanistan and Persia was hinted. *Sec. Cons.* 21st Feb., 1838, No. 4.

11. *Sec. Cons.* dated 4th July, 1838, Nos. 19-22.

12. *Auckland's Correspondence with Native Rulers.* The cargo laden in five boats at Hari-ke-Pattan at the confluence of the Beas and the Sutlej mainly consisted of shawls, manufactured at Amritsar. Half the cargo was owned by the local merchants. Its departure though planned for Oct., 1837 was delayed.



state of wealth and prosperity which the preservation and the prosecution of commerce alone calculated to secure".

On 5th June, Auckland again addressed Ranjit Singh on the same lines. Thanking him for sending the merchandize via Mithankot to Bombay, he stated, "Thus will commerce defuse its wealth and advantages not only upon the waters of the Indus from its mouth up to Attock but upon the Sutlej, the Chenaub, the Ravi and the other rivers of the Punjab".<sup>13</sup> The cargo of five boats was arranged at Hari-ke-Pattan mainly consisting of shawls. Another consignment from the side of Jhelum consisted of salt and cotton. A similar consignment was to join these from Multan mainly of local produce, all meant for Bombay market.<sup>14</sup>

In the meantime Ranjit Singh succeeded in frustrating an attack by the forces of Dost Mohammad Khan, the Amir of Kabul on Peshawar by capturing the fortress of Jamrud and thus reaffirming his sovereign control over the territories between the Indus and the Khyber. The British had already turned down the request of Dost Mohammad for help in recapturing Peshawar and its dependencies as the former wanted to make this help a condition for his alliance with the British. The latter had already by this time made up their mind to replace a doubtful friend like Dost Mohammad by Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk, who had long enjoyed their protection at Ludhiana. The British Government in India, therefore, decided with the approval of the Board of Control in London and the British Crown to make use of this opportunity to depute Captain Burnes to Kabul to make a final bid to wean him away from the Russians. Ranjit Singh, it was thought, could be used to openly ally himself with this plan of the British Indian Government in his own interest. Auckland, therefore, unfolded this scheme to Ranjit Singh in his *Kharita* dated 11th September, 1837 saying, "I have wished to see tranquility restored between you and the Afghans...it remains to be seen in what manner Dost Mohammad will receive

13. *Pol. Cons.*, dated 31st Jan., 1838, No. 33.

14. To the above, the cargos of merchants of Ludhiana and Bahawalpur were to join at Mithankot. These included :

Shawls	100 maunds
Salt	2100 maunds
Terra Japonica (kath)	200 do
Indigo	200 do
Cotton	200 do
Pot sugar	300 do
Opium	100 do

Though salt and opium export to Bombay was prohibited yet it was allowed as drugs as a special case.

the terms of peace which Your Highness has been disposed to offer him. He has been unable to cope with your victorious troops, and almost driven to desperation, he is seeking aid from foreign alliances (Persians and Russians) and new influences, dangerous to the repose of the whole frontier of India and thus, fresh causes of disturbances may be roused in the poor and unprofitable mountains of Cabul".

Thus, the ball was set rolling towards an alliance between the British, Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk and Ranjit Singh, at a time, when Ranjit Singh was feeling quite worried, if not insecure, about the anti-Ranjit Singh postures of Dost Muhammad Khan.<sup>15</sup>

This was the position of Ranjit Singh in 1837 inspite of the fact that in the treaty signed with Shah-Shujah-ul Mulk in March 1834, the former had secured a firm commitment from the latter to the effect that Afghanistan recognised the sovereignty of Lahore Durbar on all provinces and regions earlier under the control of Afghanistan in the Indian sub-continent viz., "Kashmir with boundaries extending to east, west, north and south, together with the forts of Attock, Chuchch, Hazara, Kehl-ul-Aab (Indus) with its dependencies on its left bank and on the right bank viz., Peshawar with Eussafzay territory of Dour, Tank, Gorank, Kalabagh and Khushalgarh with their dependent districts of Dera Ismail Khan and its dependencies, together with Dera Ghazi Khan, Kot Mithan and their dependent territory of Sanghar, Heren, Dajel, Hajipoor, Rajipoor and the three Kuchies, as well as Mankerah with its district and the province of Multan."<sup>16</sup>

This treaty had 14 articles and contained very specific provision for the encouragement of mutual trade and commerce on both the sides.

Actually if we have a close look at the Tripartite Treaty of 1838, signed between the British Indian Government, the Lahore Durbar and Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk, it can be found out that almost all these 14 articles of the treaty of 1834 were incorporated in it with four additional articles added on the suggestion of Lord Auckland, the then Governor General of British India. In this case, articles Nos. 7 and 9 are important.<sup>17</sup>

In the 7th and 9th articles it was stipulated as under :

7th : "Merchants of Afghanistan who will be desirous of trading with

15. In his minute dated 10th July, 1838, Auckland had categorically stated : "India cannot be assailed from the west by any army, which could be alarming to us, but through the Punjab." *Sec. Cons.* dated 10th July, 1837, No. 5.

16. *Pol. Cons.*, dated 2nd September, 1834, Nos. 60-61.

17. *Sec. Cons.*, dated 26th September, 1838, No. 16.



Lahore, Amritsar or any other part of Maharaja's possessions shall not be stopped or molested on their way, on the contrary strict orders shall be issued to facilitate their intercourse and the Maharaja engages to observe the same line of conduct on his part in respect to traders who may wish to proceed to Afghanistan".

9th : "Any of the Maharaja's officers who may be deputed to Afghanistan to purchase horses or on any other business as well as those who may be sent by the Shah into the Punjab for the purpose of purchasing piece goods, or shawls etc. to the amount of Rs. 11000 will be treated by both sides with due attention, and every facility will be afforded to them in the execution of their commissions". Earlier when Burnes was proceeding to the courts of Dost Mohammad on his Political Mission, Ranjit Singh in one of his verbal communications also made clear to him that his dominions included Ladakh and its dependencies. In his usual style, the Maharaja told the British emissary "that by the grace of God from Ladakh to Amarkot my subjects are contented and happy."<sup>18</sup>

In May 1838, when the Foreign Secretary to the British Indian Government came to the Court of Ranjit Singh for finalizing the terms of the Tripple Alliance, the latter insisted that his treaty of 1834 with Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk should be the basis on which the new alliance should be formed with an additional proviso that the Lahore Durbar be made a full partner in the military operations against Dost Mohammad Khan on the basis of sharing of expenses incurred on the operations and half-half share of the booty secured.

Lastly, he wanted "that Kandhar, after its conquest, should be given to the Lahore Durbar, by way of incentive to the Khalsa forces, who being gratified by the acquisition of that territory, will be prepared to prosecute with ardour and zeal the expedition against Kabul, for it is a vast enterprise and when entered upon with pleasure and goodwill may be speedily brought to a satisfactory termination."<sup>19</sup> However, as the final text of the treaty shows, the first proposal was met by the British half way, while the proposal contained in the second part was admitted in a more circumvent manner without conceding to the Lahore Durbar claim to occupy Kandhar after its conquest by the joint forces.

Though once again the British gave complete edge to political considerations over commerce and trade, yet the latter could not

---

18. *Pol. Cons.*, No. 102, dated 7th August, 1837.

19. *Sec. Cons.*, No. 104 A, dated 17th Oct., 1838;

altogether be pushed aside, nor totally ignored, as the later events proved particularly after the annexation of Lahore Durbar by the British. The Indo-Afghan and Indo-Russian trade, particularly in the region of the Khannates of Bokhara, Khiva and in Yarkand, remained a major factor influencing relations between these countries during the later half of the 19th century and thereafter. This fact is vouchsafed by a large mass of documentary evidence, available on this subject in the National Archives of India and in the various archival centres in the U.S.S.R.



## Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Alum-i-Mufida-i-Punjab : 1877—87

Nazar Singh\*

A scholar working on modern Punjab faces a number of problematic issues concerning both, the method of investigation and the matter to be investigated. How to begin with? From where to begin with? The questions like these may appear simple, or even simplistic to a professional scholar. But it cannot be so in the case of a beginner in the pursuit of historical research. The problem gets complicated when one finds most of the works on Punjab history suffering from parochialism. This parochialism originated with the English writings of the late 18th and early 19th century European writers<sup>1</sup> who treated Punjab history as the story of the rise and progress of the Sikhs. Gradually, it led to the identification of Punjab history with the past history of the Sikhs. This identification was a mark of 'regionalism' and 'communalism' combined together. It underlined an approach which was based on an understanding that the only way to know the Sikhs was to begin with their 'religion.' However, these writers, in the absence of a well defined and known Sikh religious tradition,<sup>2</sup> fall back upon Sikh past. It was the making of a religio-historical approach which did not and could not make a distinction between a work on Sikhism and a work on the Sikhs as a part of Punjabi people. It explained Sikh faith with reference to historical events in the Punjab and it sought to explain historical phenomenon with reference to Sikh religious beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

The approach continued to prevail through what is epitomised as 'Sikh Studies.' The latter are distinguished for a sort of 'localism' in the sense that the past of the Punjab is completely subdued to Sikh history. It makes 'community' rather than 'region' a matter of paramount interest

---

\*Department of History, Himachal Pradesh University, Simla.

1. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs* (Calcutta, 1962).
2. Trumpp, Ernest, *The Ādi Granth* (London, 1877), Preface, xcvi. "The religious system of the Sikhs has been touched already by different writers, but in such general terms, that but little can be gathered from them."
3. This trend was singularly prevalent among the western writers who wrote on the Sikhs before the publication of Lepel H. Griffin's, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, in 1870.

for the historian. Region, seen through the prism of 'community' breaks into communal localities. This approach is no where so marked as in the case of studies which explain modern awakening in the region of the Punjab in terms of 'Sikh Renaissance.'<sup>4</sup> The latter is said to begin with the Nirankaris and Namdharis in 1850's. Passing through the different stages of Singh Sabha, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, the Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Punjabi Suba Agitation, it is said to land successfully in the establishment of 'Punjabi Suba' in 1966.

Thus, it is the one but not the only variety of parochialism. The second variety of parochialism lies in the pseudonationalist approach which treats the process of modern awakening in Punjab as the outcome of 'movements' from other regions of India. These 'movements' are put together to create and gather the impression of that historical process which underlined the development of India as a modern nation.<sup>5</sup> This approach suffers from the ignorance of time-lag caused by the difference in time of occupation of different regions of India by the British. The modernisation was initiated by the British regime. But it affected different parts of India at different times. Given the evolving nature of the regime itself and rich diversity of India, the possibility of a uniform pattern in the politico-cultural evolution of modern India does not seem to be real. The various parts of India came into touch with the British system as well as with one another at different times. This time-lag is important for our right understanding of the 'movements.' These 'movements' originated in different parts of the country at different times. These also did not develop free of changes in their organisation and ideology. The process of internal transformation will have to be considered connecting one

4. This historiographical trend is most significantly represented by Harbans Singh in *The Heritage of the Sikhs* ; also see his article, 'Origins of the Singh Sabha' in Harbans Singh and N.G. Barrier (ed.), *Essays in Honour of Dr Ganda Singh* (Patiala, 1976), pp. 273-81.

5. This method began with J. N. Farquhar's *Modern Religious Movements in India* which came out in 1914. "It was clear that to bring these many movements together, arrange them in related groups, and set them forth as varying expressions of a great religious upheaval would be a far more illuminating piece of work than the description of them as units ever could be", says his preface. Being himself a missionary, Farquhar laid down the foundations of a religious approach towards Indian Nationalism. This *Padari* approach, always prone to communal bias, finds expression through a number of writings of which the mention can be made of K. P. Karunakaran, *Religion and Political Awakening in India* (Meerut, 1969).



movement with another.

An example will make the point clear. Brahmo Samaj was originated in the first half of the nineteenth century in Bengal. It developed by passing through conflicting phases as indicated by its splits. Its organisation was spread over more than one province and region of India. However, it failed to transcend Hindu community.<sup>6</sup> Again ideologically, it moved from a liberal-universalistic outlook to a narrow sectarian ideology.<sup>7</sup> In short, the movement had been marked by both 'universalism' and 'communalism.' Now, we all know that Prarthana Samaj<sup>8</sup> in Maharashtra and Arya Samaj<sup>9</sup> in northern India including Punjab came into contact with the Brahmo Samaj. One can study these three movements together. But the contradictory character of the Brahmos and their movement must be taken into consideration while connecting these three samajs together and seeking a common source for their origin in the spirit of reformation, initiated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The divisions among the Brahmos defy any simple generalisation such as its overtly thorough nationalist character. The tendency persists among scholars to interpret Prarthana Samaj and Arya Samaj with reference to the framework drawn from the earlier and universalistic phase of Brahmo Samaj movement. This is an historical approach, because it conceals the communal characteristic of these three samajs, none of which could transcend Hindu community. They were pan-regional, though not essentially nationalist. Here the important point to be noted is that communalism can geographically be pan-Indian in the same way as nationalism. In fact, Hindu and Muslim communalism had been so. It must not be taken for nationalism, simply because it obliterates 'region.'

Hence, extreme localism of 'Sikh Studies' leads to Sikh communalism, whereas the complete rejection of regional reality by the pseudo-nationalist scholars throws us into the net of Hindu and Muslim communalism. A genuine regional approach should be evolved out, which must keep in view that different regions of India came into contact with the modernising influences of British rule in India at different times. Moreover, as the regime itself was the most potent source for these new intellectual and cultural forces begetting move-

6. Bose, Nemaï Sadhan, *Indian Awakening and Bengal* (Calcutta, 1969), Passim.

7. Mukherji, Dourjati Prasad, *Sociology of Indian Culture* (Jaipur, 1969), Passim.

8. For a very perceptive article on Prarthana Samaj, see Richard Tucker's 'Hindu Traditionalism and Nationalist Ideologies in Nineteenth Century Maharashtra' in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 10, pt. 3, July 1976.

9. Jones, Kenneth W., *Arya Dharm* (Delhi, 1976), Passim.

ments, so British imperialism should more than anything else, be the starting point of our enquiry. It would be particularly true in the case of the Punjab where the modern awakening was virtually started by the British administration.

Anjuman-i-Punjab stands for this sponsored politico-cultural awakening in the region of the Punjab. As is already shown,<sup>10</sup> it was a regional institution of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, supposed to work for a common and composite heritage of the three communities as well as of the Indian sub-continent. It worked from 1865 to 1887, but failed in its object. It withered away by 1887 after leaving a rich legacy for all future movements in Punjab, such as, Lahore Arya Samaj, Singh Sabha, Hamdard-i-Islamia, Hindu Sabha and Indian National Congress.

Like the Anjuman-i-Punjab, the Lahore Oriental College was the creation of G.W. Leitner. Started as a school in 1865, it was given the name of a college in the educational year 1872-73. It was run by the Punjab University College or the Senate. Its purpose was to create literature in the indigenous languages through the translations of European works into Indian languages, so that the latter could be used as medium of instruction at the lower levels of education. However, much progress could not be achieved in this respect, because of its emphasis upon classical languages as well as traditional knowledge which had hardly any practical use. People wanted modern knowledge and the demand for English education as well as education through English was so overwhelming that the Oriental College could attract only the few scholars from the traditional elite sections such as *pandits*, *mullahs* and *bhais*. The efficiency of the college further suffered after early 1872 when E. Trumpp left it. The Director of Public Instruction, Punjab remained dissatisfied with the functioning of the college between 1872-76, so much so, that he recommended even its closure.<sup>11</sup>

Towards the close of 1876, Leitner became the Superintendent of the college. The most important change he made in the objects of the college was that it was to be used to produce new *pandits*, *maulvis* and *bhais* among the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs respectively. The purpose was to use the three religions for educational and political

10. Nazer Singh, 'Anjuman-i-Isha'at-i-Alum-i-Mufida-i-Punjab, 1865-77', *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, October 1982, pp. 135-41.

11. See, *Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and Its Dependencies for the Year 1870-71*, pp. 14-17; 1871-72, pp. 28-29; 1872-73, p. 30; 1874-75, p. 12; 1875-76, p. 12; 1876-77, p. 16. (To be referred afterwards as the P.E.R.)



tasks. These new preachers were supposed to work for the reform of their respective religions among their respective communities. They were also expected to impress upon their own people the value of loyalty to the British regime. The College turned out to be a place for the training of priesthood for communal reformation, particularly in the case of Sikhs.

In the wake of the rise of Namdhari Movement among the Sikhs of the Punjab in 1860's, the British administration strongly felt the necessity of knowing Sikh tradition so that the latter could be used to meet Kuka Ram Singh's challenge. The services of E. Trumpp were hired to translate Sikh scriptures into English. Trumpp stayed in India from December, 1870 to Feb., 1872. He proposed that Punjabi in Gurmukhi script should be encouraged in order to make the Sikhs better aware of their own religious beliefs as distinct from those of the Hindus. This idea was picked up by the Singh Sabha, Amritsar, which came into being in 1873. Leitner introduced the teaching of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi characters at the Oriental College during the year 1877-78. As Leitner believed in the oneness of religious instruction and secular education, the Sikh scripture was taught in the 'Punjabi class' for an examination, called, Budhimani.

The step was far from being in tune with the secular system of education, but it was fully in accord with the programme of Singh Sabha. To quote the Punjab, D.P.I., "I have no doubt that this measure is popular amongst a certain section of the community but the propriety of teaching a religious book of the Sikhs in a government building, where the instruction in the Bible is prohibited, appears to me to be open to question."<sup>12</sup> The views expressed by the D.P.I. were not accepted by the Punjab Government. The Lieutenant-Governor appreciated that the Sikh scholars coming from the priestly sections such as *granthis*, *mahants* and practising *pandits* were attending the 'Punjabi class' or 'Bhai Class'. The Director had missed the point that his government wanted to patronize Singh Sabha reformers, and to guide them through the Oriental College. However, realising his own mistake and retracing his own steps, the Director wrote in his report for the year 1878-79, "A Punjabi class has lately been added to the instruction in which the *Granth* is taught, and this is no doubt a source of gratification."<sup>13</sup>

Meanwhile, the Anjuman-i-Punjab had been taken over by mutual

12. The P.E.R., 1877-78, p. 29.

13. Ibid, 1878-79, p. 14.

bickerings and divisions. The problem of unity among the members of the Anjuman had surfaced in 1877 when Leitner was criticised for his role in the closure of Delhi College. His activities and educational ideas were suspected and criticised. The Lahore Indian Association came into being and it made opposition to Leitner, as one of the major issues of its programme. The Lahore Arya Samaj, after having failed to get official patronage for the works of Swami Dayanand,<sup>14</sup> joined the critics of Oriental College and the Punjab University College. The Brahmo Samaj, which had largely a body of the Bengali community, did not approve of the establishment of Punjab University as demanded by Leitner and the Punjab Government since 1877. In reply to Punjab Administration's slogan of a 'National University' for the Punjab, many of the Brahmos raised, what the *Civil and Military Gazette*<sup>15</sup> called the bogey of Calcutta University in danger. Sayed Ahmed Khan had questioned the very idea of 'Oriental Education' as visualised by Leitner. Khan was the first prominent Indian to offer a critique of education in Punjab, and he voiced against it all along the years between 1866-84.<sup>16</sup> The success of his 'Aligarh Movement' and the starting of M.A.O. College in 1877 were undermining Punjabi Muslim support for Oriental College and Punjab University College. The Anjuman-i-Islamia, Lahore, passed into the hands of men influenced by Sayed Ahmed Khan's pan-Muslim feelings. Persons like Rai Bahadur Barkat Ali Khan left the Anjuman-i-Punjab and joined Anjuman-i-Islamia. Others like Rai Bahadur Mohammad Hayat Khan actually worked for a split in the Anjuman-i-Punjab in early 1879.

The educational controversy was further heightened when Viceroy, Lord Lytton, declared on 12th April, 1879 that Punjab University College would be raised to university and the new University of Punjab would function for the ideals set forth by Punjab education movement under Leitner. This controversy caused a split in the Anjuman-i-Punjab. Leitner was, thus, in need of support for the successful execution of his own ideas which were as much political as educational. It was for this reason, he actively participated in the making of Singh Sabha Movement which was set on by the formation of Lahore Singh Sabha on 12th November, 1879.

Working on the advice of Leitner, the Singh Sabha Lahore opened

14. Jorden, J.T.F., *Dayanand Saraswati* (Delhi, 1979), p. 177.

15. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, November 19, 1818.

16. Shan Muhammed (ed.), *The Aligarh Movement : Basic Documents 1864-1898* (1978), Introduction, xiv, pp. 27, 263.



a Gurmukhi School in 1880 in Lahore. It was the beginning of denominational education among the Sikhs. It was based upon the idea that education should be such that it could be helpful in preserving their faith among the Sikhs who were fast losing their distinct identity. The education should be given in Punjabi. The study of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script would, because of its close association with Sikh tradition and literature, revive Sikhism. The Sikh community should be mobilised for the education of its members. The community should be made aware of its educational and religious backwardness which was causing its decline. For this, the community must have its own educational institutions. The government's help and the co-operation of European community should be sought for this purpose. As the active loyalty to the British regime would ensure this help, so all politics should be shunned.

In order to achieve this objective, the Sabha took two steps in 1880. First, an Education Committee was established. The committee included Europeans, mainly the British officials, as well as native 'Gentlemen.' Leitner was also on it. The Sabha supported his efforts of raising the Punjab University College to University level. It acted unitedly with the Anjuman-i-Punjab in the defence of the educational policy of Punjab Government which was under attack by a section of the Lahore Indian Association, a faction of Anjuman-i-Punjab, and the Lahore Arya Samaj. When the Viceroy, Lord Ripon visited Lahore on November 11 and 12, 1880, a Memorial favouring the Punjab Government's decision to convert the college into university was submitted. The 'Memorial' was on behalf of "the Anjuman-i-Punjab and kindred associations."<sup>17</sup> The latter referred to Anjuman-i-Islamia, Kasur Anjuman and the Singh Sabha Lahore. The common 'Memorial' expressed the hope that the Punjab University would provide an education imbued "with those religious and moral principles which existing in all creeds, are most consistent with true progress, and without which, the Anjuman has always maintained secular instruction in vain, if not pernicious." Thus, Singh Sabha Lahore started its activities as one of the 'kindred associations' of Leitner's Anjuman-i-Punjab. The Sabha's object was "to spread enlightenment among the Sikh community by means of the Punjabi language, to extend female education, and to raise a population that has ever been foremost in its loyalty to the British Crown by the improved cultivation of the agricultural and

---

17. *Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore*, Nov. 13, 1880, p. 5.

industrial resources of the country.”<sup>18</sup> Leitner worked for the Sabha for six years from 1880-85.

Secondly, Bhai Gurmukh Singh brought out a Punjabi weekly, *Gurmukhi Akhbar*, for propagating ideas underlying the Singh Sabha. Its first issue came out in the first week of December, 1880. It was the beginning of Sikh journalism committed to mobilize the Sikh community for its educational and religious needs. Bhai Gurmukh Singh also came into contact with Leitner who appointed him as an instructor of Mathematics at the Oriental College in 1881.

The year 1881 also saw an agitation organized by a faction of Indian Association, Lahore, and the Lahore Arya Samaj against the Punjab Government's decision to convert Punjab University College into Punjab University. Public meetings were organised in Amritsar, Lahore and Rawalpindi and memorandums were drawn and submitted against the educational policy of the Punjab Government. However, Leitner and his supporters started a counter-agitation in favour of the promotion of the college to university.<sup>19</sup>

The Singh Sabha Lahore lent its support to Leitner, and its organ, *Gurmukhi Akhbar*, wrote in the defence of Punjab University College. It drew a sharp adverse comment from *The Tribune*, Lahore, which remarked on August 27, 1881 that it would be enough to say that “Dr Lietner is a great patron, if not the president of that body.”<sup>20</sup> The agitation continued to develop, and the Sabha submitted a memorial demanding the starting of Punjab University. On it, *The Tribune* wrote :<sup>21</sup>

The Sabha is a creature of Dr Leitner, The Doctor was at one time its president and laid the few un-educated Sikhs who are its members under a deep obligation by establishing a class in his Oriental College for the preparation of *Bhais* or Sikh priests and by making arrangements for the worship of *Granth Sahib* in the college premises with flowers and *Karrah Parsad*. Some of the leading members of the Sabha again are servants of Dr Leitner's college.

The Punjab University was established in 1882. In the same year the Hunter Commission on Education was appointed. However, by this time educational controversy in the Punjab had thrown up some

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, Oct. 5, 27, 1881; *The Tribune*, Lahore, August 27, 1881.

20. *The Tribune*, Lahore, August 27, 1881.

21. *Ibid.*, October 29, 1881.



fundamental issues such as the question of 'nationality' and 'loyalty'. To this was added the language issue which came to the fore in face of the revived Urdu-Hindi controversy in northern India. The different organisations, such as the Anjuman-i-Punjab, the Lahore Singh Sabha, Indian Association and the Arya Samaj had actually been drawn into these deepening educational and language controversies. The question of language was linked up with 'nationality' issue. But the 'nationality' was identified with community, based upon religion. Communal bodies (Bhasha Pracharni Sabhas) were formed to champion the cause of this or that language. If the Anjuman-i-Islamia, Lahore, demanded Urdu, the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj agitated for Hindi. The Punjabi was rejected by all save Leitner and the Singh Sabha.

The language was seen as a vehicle of communal solidarity at the intra-community level. Leitner showed in 1883, how the different sections among the Hindus had come together to form Hindi agitation. He writes :<sup>22</sup>

When Pandits advocate the extension of Hindi, they mean the extension of Sanskrit learning through the medium of that vernacular and in the described form; when *Banyas* wish for it, they think of the same vernacular in *Nagari*, *Mahajani* or *Lande* or merely wish for the cultivation of their sacred language, Sanskrit; when anglicized Hindus clamour for it, they have in view the unification of Hindus throughout India by the adoption of the departmental Urdu.

If the Hindi demand was a manifestation of the Hindu aspirations for social and political consolidation of Hindu community, the Sikh demand for Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script was based upon the Sikh view that "from the development of their sacred language, not only educational, but also social and physical benefits are expected to flow."<sup>23</sup>

Unfortunately, Leitner did not stop just there. He had been working for the recognition of the Sikhs as a community with a religion separate from that of the Hindus, and he had successfully established the identification of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script as the sacred language of the Sikhs. This religio-linguistic separatism, which was to find expression by the ideology of the Singh Sabha, Lahore, was informed through the Oriental College. Leitner justified this communal approach to language and nationality.<sup>24</sup>

22. Leitner, G. W., *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab* (Patiala, 1971), pp. 47-48.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Leitner's own view was communal one, and being so, it did not and could not question the process of communalisation of language issue set into motion by the Brahmo Samaj on behalf of the Hindus, and by Sayed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh Movement on behalf of the Muslims.

Leitner's advice to the government to strengthen the Sikhs through education as the pillars of the empire, provides a key to the political theory underlying Punjab educational policy. This theory can be understood better, if we keep in view the rise of a politically conscious student community in Lahore. In the month of May-June, 1883, students organised public meetings in protest against the arrest of Babu Surinder Nath Banerjee in the Bengali Libel Case.<sup>25</sup> The meetings were held at the building of *The Tribune*, Lahore. The nationalist press, especially *The Tribune* hailed these meetings as the beginning of nationalist organisation and consciousness in Punjab. At one of these meetings, Bhai Ditt Singh, a Sikh student, exhorted his audience to face the British injustice by 'the perseverance with which the Sikh gurus have pursued their aims, in the face of serious difficulties.' He suggested that 'the Babu be informed that we are ready to sacrifice our lives for you.' The pro-government press in the Punjab did not approve of it. A letter appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* denouncing Bhai Ditt Singh as an unreal Sikh. Then giving his own definition of a Sikh, the letter says:<sup>26</sup>

All these statements of this so called gentleman very clearly show that he was not a real Sikh and these did rather abuse Sikhism than serve all his arguments. He seems to belong to the class of the Sikh youth, who receive education at college these days, and who are with a few exceptions, nominal Sikhs only for they have deviated so much from Sikhism as to have become something else.

It was a call for preserving the supposed Sikh sense of loyalty to the British. This sense was loosing as indicated by the Sikh youth joining the emerging nationalist movement in the country. Deviating from their 'National characteristics' the Sikh students were being affected with 'agitationary principles'. This Sikh tendency towards Indian nationalism was sought to be checked through an education which would anchor the decline in the Sikhs of their own national

25. *Civil and Military Gazette*, June 6, 1883, p. 6; *The Tribune*, Lahore, June 2, 1883.

26. *Civil and Military Gazette*, June 6, 1883, p. 6.



character. The Sikhs' participation in Indian national movement was, thus, declared as an act of apostasy. Loyalty to the British regime became a basis for the definition of Sikhism, and the Sikh. The Singh Sabha only partially eschewed this theory. Its demand for, and government's support to, 'national education' and Sikh educational institutions rested upon it.

It was with this object that the establishment of a national institution of education was mooted by the Lahore Singh Sabha in April, 1885. It was the beginning of Khalsa College Movement<sup>27</sup> by which an unsuccessful attempt was made to unite the Sikh community under the leadership of Khalsa Diwan and to rally it for ever behind the government.

By 1885, Leitner had become one of the most vocal critics of the Punjab Government's educational policy. In June 1885, the Punjab Government requested the Government of India that he should be pensioned off. It was in August, 1886 that the Supreme Government agreed to relieve him from the Punjab where "from his impracticable and obstructive character he is doing harm to the University and to the cause of education in the province."<sup>28</sup>

The Anjuman-i-Punjab met on 10th August, 1886 to bid farewell to its President, G. W. Leitner. The meeting was attended by important citizens of Lahore. Also present were Bhai Gurmukh Singh and Moulvi Abu Sayed Muhammed Hussain attending specially on behalf of affiliated Sikh societies and of the Anjuman-i-Hamdard-i-Islamia.<sup>29</sup> Leitner was told that the government had, in his absence from Lahore between June, 1885 and August, 1886, handed over the office of the Anjuman-i-Punjab to the Punjab University. The Anjuman Press had also been deprived of the printing work which the university was used to send to it.

The greatly disappointed Leitner made a long speech castigating both the Punjab Government and his Indian critics. He, however, assured that he would, at the coming Congress of the Orientalists at Vienna, "endeavour to represent in Europe, the wishes of the Anjuman-i-Punjab and of its affiliated Hindu, Sikh and Mohammedan societies."<sup>30</sup>

27. *The Tribune*, Lahore, April 18, 1885.

28. *Proceeding Home-Education*, August 1885, Nos. 29-42, lying in the National Archives of India.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

Bhai Gurmukh Singh, while refering to Leitner's contribution to the Sikh cause, said that "the Sikhs were much more indebted to Dr Leitner than any other class of the Punjabis, in as much as it was through his efforts alone that Gurmukhi was introduced into the Oriental College. The revival of the classes and of the Gurmukhi examinations, which were not held for two years owing to certain regulations passed by the university, was also due to his exertions."<sup>31</sup>

---

31. *Ibid.*



---

## Origin and Growth of Sikh Architecture

D. S. Dhillon\*

### Summary

The Sikh architecture reflects their religious thought and is primarily concerned with construction of gurdwaras. A gurdwara is a place where the Sikhs perform their daily religious rituals. In Sikh religious literature, the terms gurdwara and dharamsala appear to be referring to the same thing.

The Hindu and Muslim architectures have been mixed up in the construction of leading Sikh gurdwaras. It appears that the planning of buildings of Sikh gurdwaras carry the impact of Hindu architecture. Like Hindu temples, legendary stories have also been related with Sikh shrines. Thought and action seem to have found a unique blending in the architecture. Along with all this, the influence of Muslim style of architecture is always present. Islam had influenced artisans, particularly masons, mostly Muslims, who carried it into the ultimate execution of the buildings. Gurdwaras were no exceptions. The Sikh gurdwaras with architectural planning were constructed during the period of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Hargobind. Then came the period of great turmoil and no development was possible. During *misl* period a number of gurdwaras were got built. Building activity of Sikh shrines was notable during the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The biggest representative building in the Sikh style of architecture is Golden Temple, Amritsar. It is not on a raised ground. It is in the middle of the holy tank. A bridge connects it with Darshni Deorhi, a decorated gate. The shrine is a double storeyed building with kiosks on each corner. The top is covered by a low fluted dome.

In front of Darshni Deorhi is the Akal Takhat. The present building is five storeyed one. Ground floor was got built in 1775. Other storeys were added by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa had its dome covered with gold plates. Its central structure is triangular. It is divided into three parts and has multifoil arches. The arches on the side walls are of flattish nature. The three floors are projected with the help of brackets at the level of roofs. The fourth floor is also projected with the help of brackets and the projection is more than the three preceding floors.

All other gurdwaras built during this period exhibit similar features as described above.

—Editor.

---

\*Lecturer, History Department, Punjabi University, Patiala.

## Kangra School of Art and the Sikh Paintings

D. S. Dhillon\*

Indian painting, as a whole, has a long range of its history and reflects a good comprehensive record of both religious as well as secular feelings or ideas. In the words of V. S. Agrawal, "Indian art has four elements for its theme, namely, the divine principle, the cosmos in its two fold manifestation of good and evil, man and the material world."<sup>1</sup> This is also visualized in the paintings of Kangra School of Art.

Kangra School of Art represents the indigenous art. Towards the end of 18th century, the Kangra Valley paintings became one of the most popular schools of art in India. "The characteristic theme of Kangra painting is the romantic love. Woman loving herself but restless with longing is its constant subject while the whole function of incidental objects is 'to match the state of hearts.' Clouds, rain, trees, pitchers, flowers and torrents are all introduced as poetic symbols designed to indicate the final crises."<sup>2</sup> The majority of the paintings are in support of Vaishnava, dealing with Krishna cult. Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, Radha, the consort of Krishna are the main figures of the illustrations.

The appearance of Kangra art is not in mystery. "There is a sense in which Kangra painting could only have arisen in the Punjab Hills. Its special cult of innocent womanhood was the product of Rajput traditions as they had developed in isolation. In Rajputana, Mughal influence had been all pervasive and while a number of indigenous styles had come to maturity, they were generally wanting in precisely that quality of elegant idealism. We can only explain this difference by realizing that in the Punjab Hills, Rajput culture had enjoyed a greater freedom and hence, as a consequence, its painting expressed with more directness the basic sentiments of the courts."<sup>3</sup> Thus, the art which got its induction in Rajputana within the Rajput tradition traversed to the Punjab Hills passing through the Punjab plains. No

\* Lecturer in History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Agrawal, V. S., *The Heritage of Indian Art* (Delhi, 1964), p. 8.

2. Archer, W. G., *Kangra Paintings* (London, 1952), p. 2.

3. *Ibid.*



doubt, the Rajput art did not yield much influence over the Punjab plains where Islamic art had got its root but it began to develop under the patronage of Rajput rulers in the hills, where the Muslim influence was considerably less.<sup>4</sup> However, in the first half of the eighteenth century, the Pahari art or Kangra School of Painting began to develop as an independent centre of art, especially during the reign of Raja Sansar Chand (1775-1823). Also during this period, there was gradual development of Pahari art into its sister art centre, developed at Guler, Mandi and some other places.

As Krishna cult was popular in the Hill States, so illustration work representing the life of Krishna and Radha became very popular there. Some of the most impressive works of the hill painters were illustrations from the *Bhagwat Purana* and the work of Bihari's *Sat Sai*. However, after the conquest of Kangra by the Sikh ruler, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the paintings of some of the Sikh chiefs as well as of the Sikh gurus were portrayed at Kangra art centre.

Initially, the Pahari paintings were started with the illustration work drawn from the Vaishnava literature, and had represented both the religious as well as the secular side of the art. However, a proper attention was given by the artisan on the poetry of love. With this background, the Pahari artists drew portraits of the Sikh gurus.

The various art centres in the Hill States, e.g., Mandi, Kulu, Guler, Nurpur and Chamba, have yielded us many paintings of the Sikh gurus and the Sikh princes. One of the paintings from the Kangra School, drawn at the Guler Centre, is the portrait of Guru Harkrishan.<sup>5</sup> Here, the Guru is shown on a rug with vertical strips, holding a bow in one hand and arrow in the other. Besides the Guru, are shown two attendants, one with a fly whisk and the other with a bow and a quiver containing arrows. The Guler Centre of hill paintings, yielding maximum paintings of Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Harkrishan, Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh in the typical Guler style with Pahari dress, are noteworthy.

Another important centre of hill paintings was Mandi. This centre has also painted the pictures of the Sikh gurus. It is believed

4. Gotz, Herman, *Study in History and Art of Kashmir and Indian Himalaya*, Otto Harrossowitz, p. 165.

5. Archer, W. G, *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Vol. I, p. 164; A. Ghose, 'The Schools of Rajput Paintings' in *Roopa Lekha*, April 1929, No. 2, pp. 164-166.

that Sidh Sen, the Raja of Mandi, welcomed Guru Gobind Singh on his arrival at Mandi in c. 1697 A. D. This meeting is shown in a painting of Guru Gobind Singh. Some valuable portraits of the Sikh gurus at Mandi, such as Guru Arjan, Guru Amardas, Guru Gobind Singh,<sup>6</sup> are praiseworthy. All these portraits are of the same size and seem to be painted by the same painters in Mandi style. These portraits might have been painted towards the end of the 19th century.<sup>7</sup>

It is remarkable to note that almost all the ten gurus had been portrayed before the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh under the Kangra School of Art.<sup>8</sup> The portraits of the Sikh gurus drawn by the Pahari artists were indigenous in style and dress but the reflection of face (drawing) indicates the Muslim influence.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the Sikh chiefs were also portrayed by the Pahari artists. One of the portraits, namely, Jai Singh Kanhiya, now preserved in the Government Museum, Chandigarh (Acc. No. 280) indicates, that the Sikh *misaldars*, who sometimes penetrated into the hill states, might have been portrayed by the Pahari artists. Even the courtiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh too, were portrayed by the Pahari artists. It seems that along with the royal officials, some of the interesting festivals of the people of the Punjab were also portrayed indicating the importance of art for the common masses. A notable painting in this regard is a group of 'dancing villagers' in Guler style representing the festival of Baisakhi.<sup>10</sup>

The Sikh gurus, Sikh princes and some of the Punjabi festivals portrayed at the Kangra School of Art, if viewed in its historical perspective, have yielded us a clear interaction between the people of Punjab plains and the hills.<sup>11</sup> The artists who migrated from the Kangra hills carried with them wherever they went their own Pahari style of painting and with this came the induction of racial art and cultural mingling. This is reflected from the portraits found at Lahore, Amritsar, Patiala

6. Keshori Lal and Handa, Om Chandra, *Pahari Chitra Kala* (Delhi, 1969), Plate Nos. 24, 26, 28.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

8. Archer, W. G., *Paintings of the Sikhs*, p. 19.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 126. Archer writes that some of the festivals such as Basant and Baisakhi were celebrated jointly and are portrayed by the Rajput painters.

11. Aryan, K. C., *Punjab Paintings* (Patiala, 1975), p. 1.



and Kapurthala collection.<sup>12</sup>

The religio-cultural analysis of the Sikh portraits, drawn at the Kangra School of Art, is clearly visualized from the portraits of the Sikh gurus and the Sikh princes preserved at different places. Thus, the Kangra School was the earliest school of art under the influence of which the Sikh paintings were portrayed and yielded a considerable influence over the Sikh School of Art which originated in the first half of the 19th century and which later on, developed independently towards the end of the 19th century.

---

12. Archer, W. G., *Kangra Paintings*, p. 24; R. P. Srivastava, 'Some Aspects of History of Arts of Punjab Sikh States' in the *Sikh Sansar*, Vol. 5, No. 1 California, March 1976, pp. 28-29.

## Folk Historians of The Punjab : A Study of Marasis and Bhattis in Socio-Cultural Background

PARM BAKHSHISH SINGH SIDHU\*

Folk historians and folk history have been neglected by the modern scholars. Reason for this neglect was that those people not only wrote or said about the kings, princes and the elite, but their subject was also the common man and local surroundings. Generally, the theme was heroic and noble deeds of the tribal and community leaders. Their chivalry, generousities and enmities were qualities around which the whole narration revolved. These folk historians, from the earliest times, have been singing in praise of founders and heroes of clans.

In tribal society, mutual animosities and rivalries produced a constant state of strife and skirmishes. The bravery of the tribal heroes was sung in every home and public place. Later, this type of poetry assumed a form of its own. In the days, when writing was profession of only a few, the man, who could remember many verses was held in high esteem by the tribal chief.<sup>1</sup> They depended upon the memory of bards for their personal amusement and for the record of their own and ancestors' prowess. The bard also maintained the genealogy which established the purity of his descent.<sup>2</sup>

With the passage of time, the office of the bard like all others in India became hereditary. The pedigree was passed on with all details and marvellous accuracy to his successors. The import of such knowledge can hardly be overrated in a country where the illicit and the prohibitive degree of affinity, which form the basis of all arrangements of marriage or adoption, is the subject of most minute and complicated regulations for the whole community.<sup>3</sup>

Folk historians were Bhattis and Marasis who served the people of different communities and clans in Punjab. Although they were operating at the same time in the Punjab, their attitudes, ethos, under-

---

\*Lecturer, Punjab Historical Studies Department, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Bains, Sir Athelstance, *Ethnography* (Delhi, 1976), p. 85.

2. Russell, R.V., *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*, Vol. II (Reprint, Delhi, 1975), p. 252.

3. *Ethnography*, *op. cit.*



standing and treatment to history differed vastly.

Bhatts are traditional bards and genealogists since the ancient times. Sherring considers that they were more distinct in ancient India than in modern times.<sup>4</sup>

Like other Hindu caste people, Bhatts trace their origin to Brahma, although Crooks considers them to be of a minor caste of Brahmans and of Rajput origin.<sup>5</sup> But the general view is that they have the Brahmanic lineage from Kaushish Rishi. They also observed the traditional Brahmanical rituals, sacred thread and other observances needed to be followed. Their main occupation was to maintain the genealogies of their patrons. They used to go to their clients once a year to record the birth, death or any other important event connected with them. With the passing of age their *valis* or record books sometimes became so bulky that they were carried on camel or horse back. To quote Molley, the Bhatts also composed and recited verses of interminable length at weddings and other family festivals recounting the achievements of the family and extolling the deeds of the ancestors.<sup>6</sup>

During the birth and marriage ceremonies, they used to eulogise their patrons. In the princely courts and in the assembled gathering of the clients, they used to narrate in pompous language the genealogical history of the family.<sup>7</sup>

Even when there were no such special occasions, the patrons used to invite them on some special festivals. Along with the narration of historic deeds of the family, they used to sing passages from epics like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. They had also developed the faculty of composing and reciting poetry on the spur of the moment.

The community of Bhatts is divided into many branches. These serve separate areas and different occasions. Their main branches were : Biram Bhatt, also called Brahman Bhatt, Jaga Bhatt and Charan Bhatt. Sir Henry Elliot considers that "Biram Bhatts recite the deeds of ancestors at wedding and other festive occasions ; Jaga Bhatts keep the family records particularly of Rajputs and are entitled by right of succession to retain the office, whereas Biram Bhatts are hired for particular occasion."<sup>8</sup>

Charan is a group of wanderer Bhatts. They used to be deputed as escorts of caravan, and keeper of the treasure. It was considered

4. Sherring, M.A., *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I (Delhi, 1974), p. 272.

5. Crook, William, *Natives of Northern India* (Delhi, 1980), p. 166.

6. O'Molloy, L.S.S., *Indian Caste Customs* (Delhi, 1974), p. 28.

7. *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, op. cit., p. 272.

8. Eliot Sir, Henry, *Supplimentary Glossary*, Vol. I, p. 18.

sinful to kill a Bhatt or Charan. If he could not stop the sure loot of the caravan, he used to commit suicide by the rite, known as *Traga*. To quote Crook, "Like the herald in classical literature, they enjoyed immunity from outrage and their readiness to sacrifice their lives by the rite, known as *Traga*, confirmed the feelings."<sup>9</sup>

His personal security was also held sufficient for payment of debt or fulfilment of an agreement.<sup>10</sup>

Another sub-division of the Bhattas was Ranas. They were the story tellers. It is to them that the proudest Rajput looks for solace in adversity and for increased joy and exaltation in prosperity.<sup>11</sup> Other branches of the Bhattas were Sut, Maghads, Bandijan, etc.

The other folk historians—Marasis belonged to the Mohammadan faith. They were singers, minstrels and genealogists. Mr Crook is of the opinion that they are an offshoot of great Doom caste, although the root of the word marasi is an Arabic word *miras*, which means inheritance. In this sense, he was the keeper of the historical inheritance of their clients. He traced his ancestry to Arabia. The patrons of the Bhattas were the so-called higher castes of Rajputs and Brahmans. Marasis' clientele was Jat and the lower caste. Marasi is not an outsider to his clients like the Bhattas. Bhattas mostly lived in separate villages. Marasi used to live invariably in the same village as his clients used to live in. Primarily, his ancestors and the ancestors of his clients suffered, enjoyed and lived side by side in the by-gone days. From dawn of the day to the sunset he used to be present in familiar surroundings.

Unlike Bhattas, Marasi was the part and parcel of the Punjab mediaeval tribal society. He used to recite the genealogies and praise their patrons at the time of birth and marriage ceremonies. He used to go to bride's or bridegroom's house for making contact for the marriages. His wife, called Marasan, used to sing and dance at the time of marriage among the ladies of the household.<sup>12</sup>

They had to attend to the guests of their masters, accompany them on visits of condolences and congratulations. They summoned relations from far and near. They were to accompany the daughter going to her father-in-law's house or son's wife to visit her paternal house.<sup>13</sup>

Crook considers Marasi to be the autolycus of modern India; he was

9. *Natives of Northern India, op. cit.*

10. Wilson, *Indian Castes*, p. 79.

11. Malcolm, Sir John, *Memoirs of Central India*, Vol. I, pp. 131-32.

12. *Gujrat Settlement Report*, 1904.

13. Crook, Williams, *Races of Northern India* (Reprint, Delhi, 1973), p. 105.



fond of jokes and anecdotes with which he amused his clients. If his fees are assured, his language is suave and complimentary but if he is made to feel that he is neglected, he pours out from his well stocked memory, old, half-forgotten scandals and gibs directed against the unfortunate family which he honours with his company.<sup>14</sup> This lampooning of the ancestors of his clients is only peculiar to Marasis. No other bard and minstrel caste of India dare to cut to size their patrons and clients.

On the death ceremonies, Marasans used to lead the *siapa* ceremony among the bereaved ladies of the family. Marasans also used to narrate stories and regularly entertained as jesters to help these ladies to kill time and reconcile them to their domestic enclaves. As they do not dance before men, they are reputed to be chaste just as no woman, who is not a prostitute will dance in the presence of men.

Marasi's job used to start with the day-break. The Jagas used to go on horse back or on foot to the clients and narrated the exalted and noble deeds of their ancestors. In the evening, in the *sath*, or meeting ground, they narrated stories, riddles, etc. The real contribution of the Marasis to the Punjabi society was that they kept the whole society conscious of their past.

Due to their Punjabi background, they considered the world to be real because they thought that this empirical world came into being through reality. So the living within the world is not *mithia* or *maya* but real one. The life deeds and exploits of its subjects are all real. They are not after the allusions or beings which are not on the surface. Mirasi's character's and patron's sole aim is to acquire or possess wordly things, which he can enjoy in this very life, and the accumulation and hoarding of wealth and property is not important to him. His whole approach is pragmatic. In his *vars*, he considers death to be a phase of life and it is not a horrifying end of life. He narrates death to be the other end-shore of life. His heroes are always ready to face the death and they long for it. The time is the stark reality for them. They do not run after the shadow which may elude him further. They want to possess and have what they can and not what they could possess.

In his themes, 'here and now' are real and his heroes want to live in this existential situation. They are not escapists from the social and political responsibilities. They own every responsibility and enjoy life by discharging the obligations.

---

14. Nesfield, *Brief View*, p. 43.

## Status of Women in the Pre-Modern Punjab

Satish K. Bajaj\*

As the pre-modern Indian society rested on the cardinal principles of caste, collectivism and continuity of tradition, the status of woman, therefore, confined to culturally ascribed roles which she had to perform.<sup>1</sup> The import of this statement is that her status can be assessed on the basis of the extent of sophistication that society had achieved and the power of ritualistic relationship which controlled the conduct, behaviour and mind of the individual in that society.<sup>2</sup> To evaluate the status of women, we must dispel misconceptions emanating from the man's view of woman as "weaker sex" and highly western value oriented view of the Indian society as backward, superstitious and ignorant. The modern scholars tend to believe that her position was inferior; she was suppressed at home, and sold in the market, a stigma to the honour of the family and a thing undesirable to take birth in the family. This kind of one sided and monolithic view of the status of woman is a simplistic unhistorical explanation.<sup>3</sup> Complex and confusing as the traditional Indian culture yet highly aesthetic as it is, it is historical obligation to grasp the status of woman which had delicate but sharp regional variations, by analysing folk and written sources of history.

Being a part of the cultural matrix of India, the position of women in the Punjab, generally speaking, had striking similarity with the women of the rest of India. Nevertheless, in some respects it was

---

\* Reader, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. *Role and Status of Women in Indian Society* (A collection of papers, Calcutta, 1979), p. 8.
2. Altekar, A.S., *Position of Woman in Hindu Civilization from Pre-historic Times to the Present Day* (Benaras, 1937), p. 1.
3. There is a general understanding that a woman had no status for being illiterate, victim of superstition and blind faith. She had no dignity, sensibilities and conscious existence. She lived under the absolute domination of man who practised such heinous crimes as infanticide, made her sit on the burning pyre of her husband, socially suppressed her and privately distorted her physical being.



unique and varied from one social strata to another. Irrespective of the social segment she belonged to, she enjoyed considerable authority within the four walls of the house although her birth was not looked upon as a welcome addition to the family. This attitude became so rigid in the castes and communities which had acquired higher status in the social ladder on being a part of religious, economic and political elite that they began to practise infanticide.

Not much actuated by economic motives, as by the feeling of honour and pride of belonging to the elite of the society, the high castes and dominant communities in the rural society of Punjab particularly a section of the Khattris, Jats and Rajputs adopted this practice<sup>4</sup> which, of course, exclude a large majority of the Punjabis.

It is interesting to note that the folk tradition corroborates the official documents about the methods of infanticide. The *Heer Waris Shah* describes stifling, poisoning and drowning as some of the methods of infanticide.<sup>5</sup> The official records mention more subtle and sophisticated methods such as death by starvation, gulp of milk causing colic and exposure to extreme weather and strangulation.

With regard to social practices like *purdah*, early marriage and treatment of widows, there is a great need to have a closer view of them to evaluate their role in repressing the status of woman in society.

There is no doubt that the pre-modern society was certainly not a permissive one, for it posed a threat to the fabric of kinship which were traditionally regulated. But as regards *purdah*, an integral part of the social practices of the upper castes was not practised in the lower urban classes and the rural masses in the typical Muslim way which meant complete veil covering the whole body, living in segregated quarters and travelling in closed vehicles. There is no reference in the contemporary folk tradition to this kind of practice. But reference to covering of head and face are there in the presence of strangers and elders. It is a typical Indian practice. Seclusion is implicit not explicit in the laws of Manu.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, the Sikh Gurus did not favour the *purdah* system as women participated in *sangat*. There are many evidences to prove that in the rural society women did not practice *purdah* in parents' villages and moved around in groups as well as alone in the villages and surrounding fields. The official records of later dates make mention of women serving water to the wounded soldiers and talking to stran-

4. *Government of Punjab Selections from Correspondence*, No. 1853, p. 403.

5. *Heer Waris Shah*, edited by Jit Singh Seetal (Delhi, 1973), stanza 95.

6. Ghurye, G. S., *Indian Culture* (Bombay, 1951), p. 124.

gers.<sup>7</sup> In actual practice, woman's conduct in this regard did not fully conform to the Muslim as well as Hindu concept of ideal woman. It may, however, be pointed out that the concept of ideal woman as practised by the upper caste women included three basic qualities, i.e., efficient in the household work, modest and the one who conformed to the limits prescribed by customs and traditions.<sup>8</sup> As regards the non-dominant castes, the relationship between men and women were more free and more equal than among the formers. The folk tradition amply demonstrates that these restrictions were practised more in violation and in observance, for she has been generally depicted as quarrelsome and talkative.

Among the rural masses, the practice of early marriage prevailed. The delayed marriages were discouraged, for that made it difficult to find a suitable match and entailed more dowry. Generally the marriages were performed at the age of thirteen or fourteen.<sup>9</sup>

Widow remarriage was forbidden among certain castes and tribes which had pretension of status superiority. Widow remarriage in Punjab was not a question of caste but of status within the caste. Therefore, the prevailing view was that it was a lower form of marriage. Evidences show that the Jats almost allowed the widow remarriage. Some of the Brahmins in certain localities and lower grades of Khatri along with the rest of the castes practised it.<sup>10</sup>

If female education was absent in other provinces, it is gratifying to note its existence in the Punjab.<sup>11</sup> Most of them were more or less educated<sup>12</sup> but in the traditional way. Small girls belonging to the Muslim and Sikh families were given education at the mosques and gurdwaras by priestly class while the Hindu urban girls were educated at home.<sup>13</sup> The prejudice did exist towards female education but this

7. For details see *Foreign Department, Political Consultation*, Sept. 3, 1836, No. 7, *Dera Ghazi Khan District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, pp. 44-45; *Government of Punjab Selections from Records*, News Series, No. V-IX, pp. 14-15.

8. *Heer*, *op. cit.*, stanza No. 107.

9. For details, see *Shahpur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, pp. 37-39; *Kohat District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 65; *Gurdaspur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 25; *Lahore District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 45 and *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 29.

10. *Census Report*, 1881, p. 357 and *Census Report*, 1901, p. 219.

11. *Punjab Administration Report*, 1849-51, p. 143; H. R. Mehta, *A History of the Growth and Development of Western Education in the Punjab*, 1845-74 (Patiala, 1929), p. 12.

12. Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab* (Calcutta, 1882), pp. 98-99.

13. *Ibid.*; also see Mehta, *op. cit.*, p. 12.



was not that deep rooted as was found in other provinces. The wives of the priestly class in Punjab were generally educated who in some cases educated the other ladies. The First Administration Report mentions about the enthusiastic support of Punjabis to the cause of female education.<sup>14</sup>

The analysis of folk tradition presents an ambivalent image of woman. If, on the one hand, she was suppressed in the patriarchal social system, she exercised great authority at home. Besides administering it, she was a link between the children and father. She was consulted in all matters. From *Kissa Heer* by Waris Shah, it is clear that she had almost equal status at home and manipulated relationships, if they went astray within the family and kins. *Kissa Puran Bhagat* by Qadir Yar depicts the Hindu family wherein she is revered and respected. Sharing the parental authority as mother, she had more warm relations with children than the father whose image of aloofness is amply demonstrated in the folklore. While mother-son relations were warm, the mother, even if she happened to be a step-mother, was honoured.

The Multan Gazetteer, 1883-84 suggests that the authority of a woman in the household, rich and poor, was very extensive and most of the money transactions passed through her hand. She would manage the house, settle the marriages of children, grind corn, cook food and spin thread.<sup>15</sup> As the proverb goes '*Hukm-i-Joru bilī az Hukm-i-Khuda*,' clearly shows that her authority over husband was considerable.<sup>16</sup> From many popular proverbs, one can discern that home was considered as the most suitable place not because of the fact that there was desire on the part of society to suppress her but proper performance of her duties demanded so. A proverb goes : 'three things are bad, grinding for a man, threshing for a buffalo and travelling for women.'<sup>17</sup> Courtyard was the place, a part of home which used to play an important role in the life of a woman before and after her marriage. Here she worked on spinning wheels and quarrelled with her mother-in-law and neighbours. There are instances of strangers coming to the house and these women involved themselves in conversation with them in the absence of menfolk. On occasions of festivals and ceremonies or for purposes of fetching water from village wells and giving food to

14. *Punjab Administration Report*, 1849-51, p. 143. Also see R.C. Majumdar, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part II (Bombay, 1956), p. 77.

15. *Multan District Gazetteer*, 1901-02, pp. 97-98.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

husbands in the fields, women went out. It seems that active as they were, their husbands would at times say: "Grass for a horse, shoe-beating for a woman."<sup>18</sup> The accounts of many of the English travellers about the beauty of the Punjabi women whom he often saw drawing water from the wells are evidences showing that they did not observe *purdah* in the form of *burqa*.<sup>19</sup> There are a large number of evidences of the Sikh women who were bold and free. In the absence of their husbands, they assumed the charge of the entire household<sup>20</sup> and fought with the enemies with intrepidity of spirit highly praise worthy. A random sample of the notables would include<sup>21</sup> Mai Sukhan, the widow of Gulab Singh who resisted the surrender of Amritsar when Ranjit Singh attacked it, Rani Rattan Kaur, the widow of Tara Singh who also fought against Ranjit Singh, Mai Sada Kaur who helped Ranjit Singh to rise to power in the Punjab by encountering Sardar Gulab Singh, the Bhangi Chief, and Mai Chand Kaur who played a dominant role during crucial period of its history after the death of Ranjit Singh.<sup>22</sup>

The above account presents a spectrum of the status and position of woman which causes considerable confusion and complexity both for the reader and the analyst. Being a frontier province inhabited by war-like tribes and semi-agrarian tribal communities with strong clanish ties and influenced by the message of Sikhism, the woman was certainly in a different socio-economic and religious set-up. The agricultural Jat woman, irrespective of caste or religion, had definite rights and freedom and used to play a definite social role. She was less governed by the inhibiting taboos of the caste society, but at the time, too much honour was attached to her. The status of woman in the caste society and Muslim and Sikh elite was not much different from the women in the rest of India. But generally speaking, in actual practice this did not conform to the Muslim and Hindu concept of ideal women. There was a certain amount of laxity in the imposition of restrictions. Some of the traditions and customs of the upper caste elite had filtered down to the lower rungs of society due to acculturation process which tended to distort the image of woman and depress her status. By and large, the status of woman which emerges from the analysis of folklore and surveys of the government in the form of gazetteers and census reports

---

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

19. Hugel, B. C., *Travels in Cashmere and the Punjab* (London, 1845), p. 60.

20. Gordon, John J. H., *Sikhs* (Edinburg, 1904), p. 227.

21. *Military Memoirs of George Thomas*, p. 113.

22. *Foreign Department, Misc. Volume*, pp. 206, 257.



is not that depressed and distorted as has been described by the western trained minds who had utilitarian view. In fact, there is a bi-focal vision of the status of woman, which metaphorically speaking is like the two sides of the same coin having diametrically opposed images of the same woman, an incongruous blend of two cultural currents—one depicts her honourable, dignified, divine incarnation of supreme energy and supreme functionary at home, while the other moulds her into an object undesirable, source of all moral debasement, quarrelsome, talkative having no personality or individuality and worthy of suppression.

## Relationship between the Sirmur Chieftainship and the Mughal State based on the Sirmur Family Mughal Documents (second half of 17th and early 18th centuries)

B. R. Grover\*

The relationship between the Mughal State and the Punjab Hill chiefs (*zamindaran-i-kohistan-i-Punjab*) constitutes a significant area of study underlining the political and economic factors involved between the Sovereign Power and the chiefs. The principles which governed the relations between the Mughal State and the chief zamindars as well as landed intermediaries (zamindars) of various categories in other portions of north India were equally operative in the hill regions of the Punjab. The recent researches based on the contemporary archival source material of the Mughal age point to the fact that after submission, even the *zamindaran-i-umda* enjoying the titles of Maharajas, Rajas, Marzbans, Raos, etc., with or without *mansab*, were regarded as the state servants and were governed by the *zamindari* and *jagir* patterns of the Mughal administration.<sup>1</sup> The view merely based on the study of the Persian chronicles or *vansavalis* of the chieftains so as to consider the latter semi-independent, autonomous is no longer tenable.

In comparison to Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bihar, Bengal and a few other regions of north India, very few chieftain families of the Punjab Hills have preserved the records from the 17th to mid-19th centuries. Even such available records do not constitute continuous series so as to give a detailed picture of the political and agrarian relations with the Mughal State. Based on the family archives of the Chamba chiefs, the present writer has already analysed the institutional relationship between the Chamba chiefs and the sovereign powers

---

\*Director, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi.

1. For details, see B.R. Grover, 'Nature of Land-Rights in Mughal India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 1 (1963), pp. 1—23.



during the pre-British era.<sup>2</sup>

In the present paper, attempt has been made to analyse 21 Persian documents preserved in the family archives of the erstwhile Sirmur State (Himachal Pradesh) covering second half of the 17th and early 18th centuries. They depict the political phase, the institutional relationship between the chief and the Mughal State, inter-zamindari territorial disputes, conferment of *zamindari* rights as landed intermediaries as well as ties between the Sirmur chiefs and the Mughal Royal family. Many of the facts mentioned in the documents find equal support from the contemporary Persian chronicles. All the same, whereas the chronicles deal mostly with the political history, the documents in hand give a detailed description of many aspects on which the chronicles are either silent or make only a cursory reference. It goes without saying that only coordination of the documentary study and the description available from the chronicles can give an insight and proper perspective for the study of this region.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many a writer, even members of the ruling families wrote the histories of their respective states from the ancient times till date. For the pre-British era, they mostly relied on the local traditions, *vansavalis*, District Gazetteers and even on some Persian chronicles. However, a few of them utilised the documents of the Mughal age in personal possession of the chieftain families. All the same, their outlook remains insular, parochial and chauvinistic. On the pattern, in early twenties of this century, a scion of the ruling family wrote *Tarikh-i-Sirmur*.<sup>3</sup> He has, of course, given a detailed description of the geography, fauna and flora as well as socio-religious life of the people for the contemporary 20th century era. However, he had also the asset of the family archives. Of the vast number of documents available from the Mughal age down to the British administration he has even reproduced some of the documents.<sup>4</sup> All the same, his vision was circumscribed by lack of appreciation of the Mughal

2. Grover, B.R., 'Relationship between the Sovereign State the Mughals and Afghans and the Punjab hill chief during the 17th and 18th Centuries—a case study of Chamba chieftainship based on Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba Documents', *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, XVI Session, March 12-14, 1982, pp. 94-102; 'Relationship between the Lahore Darbar and Punjab Hill Chiefs during the first half of the 19th century till 1846', *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, XVII Session, October 8-10, 1982, pp. 230-40.

3. Kanwar Raozarwar Singh, *Tarikh-i-Sirmur*, 1912.

4. *Ibid.*, Appendix, pp. 1-50.

pattern of administration and the factors that governed the Mughal State in its agrarian relationship with the *zamindaran-i-umda* in various territories of north India.

Of the total number of 21 documents under study, there are 15 *farmans*, one *sanad* and six letters (*marsalas*). Of these, 4 *farmans* pertain to Shahjahan's reign, while 10 *farmans* were issued by Aurangzeb and one by Muhammad Muazam Shah Alam (entitled Bahadur Shah). Three *farmans* of Shahjahan's reign instruct the Sirmur chief to help in the envisaged plan of invasion and conquest of Garhwal. They also hold out a promise for the transfer of some of the territories in the jurisdiction of the Garhwal chief and bordering Sirmur as additional *zamindari* to the Sirmur chief. Later on, another *farman* issued by Aurangzeb gives instructions to the Sirmur zamindar for a campaign against the recalcitrant zamindar of Garhwal. Three *farmans* of Aurangzeb's reign give description about the movement of Suliman Shikoh, son of Dara Shikoh, during the war of succession to the Mughal throne, Suliman Shikoh's refuge in Garhwal and the instructions issued to the Sirmur chief for help in the planned apprehension of Suliman Shikoh. One *farman* of Shahjahan and later on four *farmans* issued by Aurangzeb from time to time, one issued by Muhammad Muazam Shah Alam (entitled Bahadur Shah) confer the *rajgi* and *zamindari* on the Sirmur chief conditional upon the rendering of the services and payment of *peshkash* to the Mughal State. They clearly confirm the fact that the Mughal State claimed sovereign political rights over the hill chiefs, who, after submission, were regarded as servants of the State and in lieu of the service rendered by them, they were entitled to their *zamindari*, certain categories of *jagir* and other perquisites (*haquq*). The *farmans* issued by Aurangzeb refer to the territorial disputes between the Sirmur and Srinagar and give instructions to the Mughal *faujdars* for the restoration of the territories to the Sirmur chief. Further, a *sanad* issued in Aurangzeb's reign dispossesses certain zamindars of the *zamindari* rights in their *mahals* in *sarkar* Saharanpur, *subah* Shahjahanabad, in the neighbourhood of Sirmur territories and confer the *zamindari* rights on the Sirmur chief. The above *farmans* and the *sanad* equally bring out the hierarchical pattern of landed intermediaries (zamindars) attached to the chiefs who acted as superior zamindars for payment of the revenues (*peshkash*) to the Mughal State. They equally emphasised the fact that the Mughal State as Sovereign Power had the right to reshuffle the superior *zamindari* rights on the part of the hill chieftains. They also underline the Mughal administrative set-up



even on inter-*subah* basis for the suppression of the recalcitrance on the part of the local hill chiefs and the realisation of the revenues (*peshkash*) from them.

Six letters (*marsalas*) written by Jahan Ara (daughter of Shah-jahan), addressed to the Sirmur chiefs acknowledge the receipt of various gifts as token of *peshkash*. They also refer to the fact that of the various items received from Sirmur, ice received during the summer season was an important item. In fact, the Mughal State had proper supply of ice by some of the hill chiefs and maintained regular establishment for the same.

The above documents may be summarised and analysed as under :—

Shahjahan's *farman* dated 18th *Jamadi* II, 28th R.Y., 1064 Hijra/ 8 May, 1654, addressed to Raja Mandhata Parkash (1630-1654) gives description about the plan of Iraj khan, *faujdar* of Jammu and Kangra about the planned invasion and annexation of Srinagar and instructs the Sirmur chief to mobilise the support of the armed forces (*sawar* and *piyada*) of all the hill zamindars (*zamindaran-i-kohistan*).<sup>5</sup> It also holds out a promise that whatever territories were to be conquered from the *marzban* of Srinagar adjacent to Sirmur *zamindari* would be transferred to the latter in *watan*. The territories bordering Kumaon would be transferred to the latter chief and the territory of Dun would be annexed by the Mughal State. Another *farman* dated 24th *Muharram*, 28th R.Y., 1065 Hijra/4 December, 1654, communicated through Sād Ullah Khan further mentions the campaign undertaken by Khalil Ullah Khan and requires the Sirmur chief to render full armed services to him.<sup>6</sup> It also reiterates that Dun outside the hills would be incorporated as *khalisa sharifs* whereas the adjacent territories to Sirmur would be transferred to him in *zamindari*. Another *farman* issued by Shahjahan, dated 11th *Rabi* II, 28th R.Y., 1065 Hijra/18 February, 1655 communicated through Sād Ullah Khan and addressed to the Sirmur Raja Sobhag Parkash (1654-64) also refers to the campaign by Khalil Ullah Khan and holds out similar promises for the conferment of the *zamindari* from the territories of Garhwal on the Sirmur chief.<sup>7</sup> The 4th *farman* dated 22nd *Jamadi* I, 28th R.Y., 1065 Hijra/30 March, 1655 addressed to

5. Also see, Nawab Sams-ud-Daula Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maathir-ul-Umara*. Persian text I, pp. 268-272, translated by H. Beveridge, Revised, Annotated and Completed by Beni Prasad (Patna, 1979), I, pp. 685-87.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 775-82; tr. pp. 767-70.

7. *Ibid.*

Raja Sobhag Parkash states that on the recommendation of Khalil Ullah Khan and in lieu of his services, the territory (*wilyat*) of Kotaha, bordering the territories of Sirmur were conferred as *watan* and *altaghma* (*jagir*) on the zamindar of Sirmur. He should capture it from the *zamindari* of Kotaha territory and bring it under his occupation.<sup>8</sup>

Aurangzeb's three *farmans* dated 19th *Jamadi* I, 1069 *Hijra*/12 February, 1659, 16th *Shawal*, 1st R.Y., 1069 *Hijra*/9 July, 1659, 16th *Muharrom*, 1st R.Y., 16 October, 1659 addressed to Raja Sobhag Parkash give details about the movements of Suliman Shikoh in Garhwal and the operational measures to be adopted for restricting his movements and ultimate arrest. The first of these *farmans* states that Shuja after passing from Allahabad was defeated by the Royal forces and later on having made his way as a wanderer towards Bengal was again defeated and that Muhammad Sultan Bahadur had been deputed to chase and arrest him. It also states that Suliman Shikoh had reached Srinagar and was in correspondence with Dara Shikoh. It enjoins upon the Raja to intercept correspondence and to take all appropriate steps for the arrest of Suliman Shikoh. The second *farman* also reiterates the position about Dara Shikoh and Suliman Shikoh. It regrets defiance and short-sightedness on the part of Raja of Srinagar. It further states that Raja Rajroop (of Jodhpur) along with a huge army comprising *amirs* and *mansabdars* would be shortly leading an expedition against the Raja of Srinagar.<sup>9</sup> It enjoins upon the Sirmur chief to be ready along with his armed forces and to join the Royal forces after they reach Srinagar for the punishment of Srinagar chief. The third *farman* reiterates the position. It further spells out that Raja Rajroop would enter the hills on 22nd of *Muharram* for the punishment of the zamindar of Srinagar.<sup>10</sup> It also adds that Motmad Rad Andaz Khan along with heavy artillery would also join the Royal forces for the devastation of the zamindar of Srinagar.

Aurangzeb's four *farmans* dated 5th *Shawal*, 32nd R.Y. (Shahjahan), 1068 *Hijra*/6 July, 1658, 14th *Safar*, 10th R.Y./16 August, 1666; 20th *Rabi* I, 31st R.Y. 1109 *Hijra*/3 February, 1687 and 2nd *Rabi* II, 45th R.Y./6 September, 1701 confirm the Raja of Sirmur in his position. The first of these *farmans* addressed by Aurangzeb to Raja Sobhag Parkash of Sirmur mentions the latter as obedient to Islam (*mutih-ul-*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 277-81; tr. II, Part I, pp. 574-78.

10. *Ibid.*



*Islam*) and informs him about the Royal enthronement. It directs the Raja to continue his submission, obedience and services to the monarch which would entitle him Royal favours. The second *farman* addressed to Bahari Singh, obedient to Islam, recognises him as the Raja of Sirmur after the death of his father, Sobhag Parkash and confers *khilat* along with the title of Budh Parkash (1664-84) and *rajgi* of *Wilayat-i-Sirmur*. It also enjoins upon him for the continuation of submission, obedience and rendering of services to the Mughal State. The third *farman* issued by Aurangzeb through Asad Khan to Jog Raj, obedient to Islam, accepts his request along with *peshkash* for his recognition as the Raja after the death of his father, Budh Parkash. It further confers on him the title of Mast Parkash along with the *rajgi* of *Wilayat-i-Sirmur*. It also directs him to continue his services on the lines mentioned in the earlier *farman* and also enjoins upon him to show complete obedience to the Mughal *faujdars*. The fourth *farman* issued by Aurangzeb to Hari Parkash, obedient to Islam, also accepts his request for his recognition of the Raja alongwith *peshkash* and *nazrana* etc., sent by him. It confers the *rajgi* and *zamindari* of Sirmur along with title on the Raja. On similar lines as stated earlier, it enjoins the Raja for submission to the state as well as to the Mughal *faujdars* of the neighbouring territories. Similarly, the *farman* dated 29th Rabi II, 2nd R.Y./18 July, 1708 by Muhammad Muazam Shah Alam, son of Alamgir *Badshah* (entitled Bahadur Shah) to Bhim Parkash confers the title of *rajgi* and *zamindari* of Sirmur on him.

Aurangzeb's *farman* dated 1st *Safar*, 17th R.Y./18 May, 1673 informs Raja Budh Parkash, obedient to Islam, that the incompetent son of Suraj Chand, zamindar of Akbar Nagar alias Sohana, had been dispossessed of the *zamindari* which had been further conferred in *watan* on Fidai Khan Koka. It directs the Raja to march with his forces towards that *pargana* and also occupy the adjacent *parganas* of Muzafargarh and Jagatgarh. It states that Rustam Beg along with his forces had also been detailed to help him in the operational measures. It further states that the above mentioned recalcitrant zamindar should either be murdered or driven out of the *pargana* and that the management of the *pargana* should be handed over to Fidai Khan. A *sanad*, dated 5th *Zulhijja*, 3rd R.Y. of Aurangzeb's reign/14 August, 1660 states that as Ganga Ram and Bhupat etc., zamindars of Khala Kher of Sarkar Saharanpur, *subah* Shahjahana-bad were being dispossessed of their *zamindaris* due to failure in the discharge of their duties; the above *zamindari* was conferred on

Sobhag Parkash, Raja of Sirmur with effect from the *kharif* crop. He should look after the agricultural development and welfare of the *riaya* and equally remain obedient and continue to render service to the Mughal State. The *jagirdars*, *faujdar*s and *karories* had also been given appropriate intimation to this effect.

Six letters written by Jahan Ara, daughter of Shahjahan, dated 16th *Jamadi* II, 13th R.Y. (Aurangzeb)/7 April, 1670; 11th *Shawal*, 14th R.Y./21 February, 1671; 21st *Rabi* II, 18th R.Y./25 July, 1674; 7th *Jamadi* I, 21st R. Y./8 July, 1677; 21st *Ramazan*, 21st R.Y./6 November, 1678 and 25th *Muharram*, 43rd R.Y. (Aurangzeb)/2 August, 1698 to Raja Budh Parkash acknowledge the receipt of various gifts, the supply of ice from Sirmur and Garhwal and the boundary territorial disputes between the zamindars of the above chieftainships.<sup>11</sup> The first letter acknowledges the receipt of a few animals and baskets of pomegranates along with a detail in a separate list as a token of *peshkash*. She also informs the Raja that she had not been able to make recommendations for him to the king who was then in Akbarabad. However, he should be well aware, that she would always pay attention to his affairs. The second letter also acknowledges the receipt of yellow myrobalans (*halila-i-zard*), wild pomegranates, jungle-fowls, pheasants and musk. It directs the Raja to send another pheasant.<sup>12</sup> It also states that out of kindness and graciousness, she (Jahan Ara) had bestowed *khillat* on him which he would receive shortly and that he should be rest assured of her kindness. The third letter also acknowledges the receipt of musk and *chanaur* as *peshkash*. It further mentions that the complaint lodged by the Raja about the misconduct of Sondha etc., his other *tahvildars* and that even though the zamindars of Sadhaura had first stood surety (*malzamni*) for the former for their presence, later on helped them to run away with all goods both in cash and kind. It further refers to request on the part of the Raja for issue of *farmans* to Ruh Alla Khan, the *faujdar* of Doab, Dilabar Khan, the *faujdar* of Sirhind, and Ali

11. Also see, H.A. Rose, 'Persian letters from Jahan Ara, daughter of Shahjahan, King of Delhi, to Raja Budh Parkash of Sirmur', *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. VII, No. 7, July 1911, pp. 449-58. Rose has merely provided the Persian texts of the letters along with literal translation into English as well date wise abstracts of the letters in English. Rose has not given any background or commentary on the subject. The translation into English of many articles mentioned in the letters is rather inapt.
12. *Murgh-i-zarin*, Rose (*Ibid.*) has translated it as 'golden-winged bird.' In fact, it is a pheasant with shining golden wings, greenish body colour and a crown (*kalghi*) on its head. It is known as *kulsa* in the local *pahari* dialect.



Akbar, the *faujdar* and *amin* of Sadhaura to take punitive measures against the above *tahvildars* and zamindars of the above *pargana*. Jahan Ara states that the Raja had committed a mistake in having again entrusted them to the zamindars. Jahan Ara regrets that she, of her own, cannot interfere in the State affairs nor can she write to anybody else in this regard. She advises the Raja to approach the Royal Court to issue orders to all those (concerned affairs) to arrest and chain the above *tahvildars* and zamindars and send them to him. She further comments that Ruh Alla Khan would never do this. The fourth letter, while acknowledging the receipt of two boxes of ice complains that the ice was dirty and not properly frozen. She wondered whether it was from the Royal *karkhanas*, as he had stated that this was sent by Sayid Shafi and Bhorai from the state ice-pit. The zamindars of Garhwal had also informed that they had sent this ice. Only God knows better as to who had sent it. As regards the territorial dispute with the zamindar of Garhwal, it states that she had communicated to His Majesty that the rightful owner should be restored his rights. His Majesty had already ordered the *bakhshis* to issue a *hasbul hukum* (command as desired by the Royal authority) to the effect that whosoever showed oppression and highhandedness would be punished. However, the zamindar of Garhwal had stated that he had not indulged in any aggression whatsoever and that his territorial boundary was traditional and hereditary and that he had reoccupied his legitimate territories of which he had been earlier forcibly dispossessed. "This is what he (zamindar of Garhwal) says while you have your own version." It informs the Raja that unless the king appoints an *amin* to make an enquiry into the matter, truth could not be revealed. Only after this, Royal forces would be deployed for this purpose. However, at present, the Royal forces were needed in Deccan and in Kabul and could not be spared for this region. It also acknowledges the receipt of all the three boxes of ice. The fifth letter acknowledges the receipt of his communication (*arzdasht*) along with pods of musk and pomegranates. As the musk sent earlier has been of fine quality, he may send more of it. However, he may take full precaution in procuring the genuine (*asl*) quality and should not send any imitation. She assures him of her favours. The sixth letter also acknowledges the receipt of a communication (*arzdasht*) and gift of a falcon and honey. As the falcon was too young (*chuzi*), she exchanged it for another one while honey was found to her liking. As regards the turbulence and hostility on the part of the zamindar of Srinagar (Garhwal), "this

is a recurring phenomenon between him and you as the former would never desist from such an unfortunate behaviour." It was good that he had brought it to the Royal notice. It also notes the complaint against that faulty inspection (*girdawari*) of ice by *daroga* Abul Rehman and the lower wages paid to the labourers at the time of snowfall. It further directs that the inspection (*girdawari*) of the icefall should be done properly and that the wages to the labour be paid as fixed earlier.



## **Presidential Address**

### **MODERN SECTION**

**Dr Pardaman Singh\***

Mr President, Dr Ganda Singh, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen :

I am grateful to the organisers of Punjab History Conference for asking me to preside over its modern section. I have no special qualifications to justify this honour, and this generous invitation stems from their affection rather than on account of my claim to historical scholarship. Eminent historians of this region have from time to time spoken from this platform about problems relating to Punjab history in terms of interpretation, historiography and source-materials. All that I can offer you is this brief melange of some impressions and views, for whatever worth they are, formed during my teaching career of nearly quarter of a century. It is a sort of pot-pourri lacking coherence or unity for which I crave your indulgence. And it has no claim to originality either.

The significance of the study of regional history will be readily conceded, for, the determining factors of history are rooted in regional economics, local society and also personal fortunes. Politics and administration at the all India level can be better understood if we have analysed events and developments at the local level. To take one example, it is not possible to study Indian nationalism without a fuller awareness of its provincial and local dimensions. It is often said that the nationalist leaders seldom forget them, so why should historians. To ignore them is to sacrifice considerable depth and richness. Efforts, therefore, should be made to build up knowledge of local, regional events based on a greater professional use of the sources than has generally been done so far. The Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, ever since its establishment in 1965, has been doing admirable work in this direction, and I wish it greater success in this endeavour in the years to come.

---

\*Head, Department of History, M.D. University, Rohtak.

Although the attention of historians has begun to be drawn towards social history of the region, and quite a few significant studies have appeared over the years depicting social and economic configuration and transformation such as G. Barrier's *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900*, Tom Kessinger's *Vilyatpur : Social and Economic Change in a North Indian Village, 1848-1968*, Peter Dunger's *The Punjab Tradition* and Himadri Banerjee's *Agrarian Society of the Punjab, 1849-1901*, but the "drum-and-trumpet" school of history still dominates most of our universities. There are still many who would say what Edward Augustus Freeman had said to John Richard Green, one of the pioneers of social history in England: "You may bring in all that social and religious kind of things, Johnny, but I can't." Needless to say that Green's observation, "in England, more than elsewhere, constitutional progress has been the result of social development" is equally true of any other society.

Then the methods too remain largely unchanged. The bulk of writing is still done in chronicle type of historical narrative. The past is presented as a series of happenings without any reference to the structure of society. At times even the relationship between the events described is not attempted and thus lending weight to the disdainful dictum of Dr Johnson, the intellectual arbiter of Augustan England, that history, is "mere mechanical compilation, in which there is but a shallow stream of thought." According to Sir L. Woodward, there are four types of historical questions to be asked : What happened ? Why did it happen ? Why did it happen in such and such way, and not otherwise ? What is the meaning or value of its happening ? Most of us tend to answer the first question only.

Certain topics have acquired a peculiar resilience, and consequently they are still the subject of intensive research and debate among historians. The Kuka Movement, Arya Samaj, Ghadar, Jallianwala Bagh, revolutionary activity, Akali Movement etc., are still very popular themes. I wish to say a few words about the Unionist Party which has received inadequate attention at least in this part of the Punjab. It is a loud thinking, and no premises or conclusions are offered here.

The Unionist Party scored spectacular success in the election of 1937. It should be an interesting and rewarding exercise to investigate this phenomenon. Was it on the basis of their sound agrarian programme ? The agrarian bills popularly called the 'Golden Bills' passed by the Legislative Assembly received enthusiastic support in the province. Or, was it that the Unionists, a party of land-owning



classes of all sorts, were able to convince all the ruralties that their interests would be protected? Or, was it that a majority of its members got elected on the strength of their 'personal stature, following and influence'? It is often said that the party lacked organisation and cohesion and it could render little assistance to its members. Or, was its success the natural and inevitable consummation of British policy of consolidating rural base for the maintenance and stability of the Empire? The policies and actions of the British rulers were crucial factors in political developments. The whole trend of British policy in the Punjab was to form a province of self-cultivating landed proprietors. Of course, there were big land-owners, especially in the western region, but they and their families retained a close interest in the cultivation of their land. Khizar Hayat Khan, finding the going uncomfortable and facing a difficult situation on account of the war, increasing communal tension and roarings of Jinnah outside the gates and not possessing the tenacity, resourcefulness and influence of Sikander Hayat Khan, often requested the governor to relieve him of his burden so that he could retire to his estate.

That the Unionist Party was loyalist and worked in the closest cooperation with the British government is widely accepted. Here is one illustration. On 16th March, 1940, the organisation of the Khaksars was declared unlawful and three days later, on 19th March there took place a violent clash between the police and the Khaksars, and on 21st March the Muslim League's session was to be held at Lahore. Sikander Hayat Khan was in a "peculiarly difficult position", for he was alive to the need of avoiding a clash between the Punjab government and the Khaksars on the occasion of the League's session. At first the Premier "asked Khan Sahib Kuli Khan of the North-West Frontier Province, who was passing through Lahore yesterday on his way to Delhi, to see Jinnah and do his best to induce him to agree to a postponement (of the League's session) without mentioning Sikander Hayat's name."<sup>1</sup> Not satisfied with this, the Punjab Governor, Craik, also urged the Viceroy to make an attempt to 'influence' Jinnah.<sup>2</sup> Lord Linlithgow asked Zafrullah to see Jinnah in this connection, and he handled "a difficult interview with much tact and without...rousing any suspicions in Jinnah's mind that Zafrullah's intervention was

---

1. Linlithgow Papers, Craik to Linlithgow, 20 March 1940.

2. *Ibid.*

in any way actuated by pressure or suggestions from outside.”<sup>3</sup> It is a different matter that Jinnah could not postpone the session at a time when he was nearly on the point of starting for Lahore. Further, Sikander Hayat Khan left the entire administration into the hands of the Governor whenever he was away from the capital. Craik reported to Linlithgow: “My ministers have all...left Lahore for the Christmas holidays...As usual, when he leaves Lahore, Sikander Hayat Khan asked me to dispose of really urgent matters in his absence on the assumptions that he would agree to my decisions. This is, of course, an entirely private arrangement between him and myself, which I am careful to keep absolutely secret. Though not quite constitutional, it is convenient...”<sup>4</sup>

But it needs careful investigation as to what factors led to this loyalism. Why did a large number of people belonging to the three communities of the Punjab regard themselves, to use the words of Sikander Hayat Khan, “Sixteen annas loyal and reliable.” And the Congress activities continued to be ‘in the trough of the wave’ so much so that when the individual *satyagraha* proved to be an ‘ineffective gesture’, *The Tribune* was constrained to plead that the Punjab be exempted, as Sind had been, from the *satyagraha* because there were very few really prominent Congress leaders in the province.<sup>5</sup>

Then there is a fierce controversy regarding the nature of the party. Was it communal? The Muslims no doubt dominated the party. Its opponents denounced it as ‘Muslim Party’, and in the governmental papers Sir Chhotu Ram, one of its architects, was often referred to as ‘Hindu adherent’ or ‘Hindu sympathiser’ of the Unionists. Is the claim that Sikander Hayat Khan was non-communal and liberal, and it was his consistent policy to make his government not a Muslim but a ‘Punjabi’ Government offering fair treatment to the minorities, justified? Or, is it that Sikander Hayat Khan joined the Muslim League and concluded Jinnah-Sikander Pact at a meeting of the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow on 15th October, 1937, with a view to achieve “the consolidation of Muslim opinion *vis-a-vis* the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha and the securing of a pledge that Muslim claims would not be ignored in framing new constitution?”<sup>6</sup> Or, did he imagine that by signing a

3. *Ibid.*, Linlithgow to Craik, 21 March 1940.

4. *Ibid.*, Craik to Linlithgow, 28 December 1939.

5. *Ibid.*, 30 November 1940.

6. *Ibid.*, 16 October 1940.



vague and loosely-worded document, he could hoodwink Jinnah and thus keep the 'great outsider' away from meddling in Punjab affairs ?

Then there is the question of Pakistan. It is often suggested that the "driving force of Pakistan comes from the provinces in which the Muslims are in a minority, and not from the prospective Pakistan itself."<sup>7</sup> How is that this demand which in the words of Viceroy Wavell began as an undergraduate 'squib' grew in popularity and intensity in the Punjab and the Muslim League was able to consolidate its position ? Why the Unionists, personally not subscribing to the separatist ideology, failed to resist the Muslim League and were increasingly tied to the wheels of League's chariot ? How did Jinnah's insistence that the Unionist label be discarded and the Ministry be called a Muslim League Party's and his argument that for a Muslim "to adhere to the Unionist Party as well as to the Muslim League was like keeping a mistress in addition to a wife" eventually succeed?<sup>8</sup> How could Jinnah, a most unorthodox Muslim, "wave the banner of religion and frighten them all to heel with it."<sup>9</sup> The result was the total wreck of the party in the elections of 1946.

I also wish to invite the attention of this distinguished audience to the need for acquiring new sources. The British Indian Government was a monumental bureaucracy, and it produced tons of written materials of all sorts. Despite considerable loss and destruction, enormous material still exists which needs locating, cataloguing, indexing and preserving. It was Curzon who said that the true history of each viceroyalty was in reality written in the weekly private letters exchanged between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. In this correspondence, he added that the events and developments, daily ups and downs of the situation, the clash of personalities, the emergence of new figures and the signs of dangers ahead were recorded with 'entire frankness.' In this context one can understand the importance of the private collections of the governors of the Punjab and other senior administrators who communicated not only with the Viceroy but with other officials and individuals and a large number of family friends. The widely-held view that the British policy in India was shaped by the intellectual ideas prevailing in England and Europe is perhaps less true of the Punjab. Here the administrators, "the forgo-

7. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, Wavell to Casey, 1 January 1945.

8. *Ibid.*, Glancy to Wavell, 21 April 1944.

9. Moon, Penderel, *Wavell, The Viceroy's Journal* (London, 1973), p. 74.

ten men of British India'' (to use Peter Dungen's phrase) exercised decisive influence in the formulation of the policies of the Government of India and India Office. The recent publication, *The Chief Justice : A Portrait from the Raj*, brings out, in the form of letters written by Sir Courtney Terrell, the Chief Justice of Bihar and Orissa, not only his experiences and attitudes during a vitally important decade in India, 1928-38, but also highlights the usefulness of this sort of material. It must be our endeavour to locate these collections in England, Ireland and secure at least their micro-films. Similarly, material pertaining to the history of scores of social, religious and literary organisations, universities and educational institutions, business houses etc., needs digging up and preservation. Needless to say that without new material, writing of history would be what John Kenyon calls, "shuffling and reshuffling the same greasy pack of facts and dealing them out in different patterns each time."

I also take this opportunity of emphasising the potential of a new kind of source-material, popularly known as 'Oral History.' Nurtured in the school of Ranke, and British professional historians, our scholars view documents as sacrosanct and tend to look upon this new source-material with suspicion and disdain. Their attitude is summed up in these words : "The historian works with documents.... There is no substitute for documents; no documents no history." They believe that interesting reminiscences, impressions, observations, memories and anecdotes may delight the readers, but these cannot offer a clear understanding of the past. It is a material for mere nostalgia, they assert.

It may be stated at the outset that oral history is no substitute for other kinds of historical enquiry. It is to be used for obtaining additional or supplementary information and filling in gaps and weaknesses in the documents. It should be treated as 'simply one more document' which ought to be assessed and evaluated in exactly the same manner you evaluate any other kind of historical evidence. As Jan Vansina puts it : "Any evidence, written or oral, which goes back to one source should be regarded as on probation; corroboration for it must be sought."<sup>10</sup> It ought to be used with great care and has to be cross-checked.

Oral evidence can be most profitably used for writing the history of rural transformation, a tribe or a religious group or an under-

10. Quoted in Thompson Paul, *The Voice of the Past : Oral History* (London, 1978), pp 210-11.



ground movement. Similarly, the attitudes of the rank and file of the political parties the 'percolation' or diffusion of nationalist or communal ideology from the elites to 'middle men' and from them to the masses, the outbreak of communal riots can be more meaningfully studied through the use of oral evidence. Its rich potential in writing social history has been so convincingly demonstrated by Paul Thompson in his *The Edwardians: The Remaking of British Society*. Charles Allen's *Plain Tales from the Raj* based on recorded conversations with more than sixty survivors of the empire gives intimate and lively glimpses of British life in the 20th century. Images of caste-ridden imperial white elite, the protocol and taboos of the *Raj*, a host of waiting Indian *mulaquatis* (visitors), the messes and homes of the officers and soldiers of Indian army, frequent retreats to the hills to escape heat and agitations, the institution of *ayahs* all flit across the eyes to give some feeling of the flavour of the life of civilians, military and police officials, planters, businessmen and missionaries.

There are numerous individuals in this region who can be called 'living histories' and who can describe the life they saw fifty or sixty years back in all vividness. The other day, I listened to a graphic account of the death and funeral procession of Swami Dayananda at Ajmer in 1883 from an eyewitness, Swami Bhishama of Karnal district, who is now 124 years old and retains a rare vigour and alertness of his faculties. My father, who retired in early fifties as Divisional Inspector of Schools and who is very old, recalls the type of teaching in schools, the extensive use of corporal punishment, the dedication of teachers and 'the attitude of English officials in twenties, thirties and forties of this century. There are, no doubt, difficulties in exploring, arranging and assessing this kind of evidence. But this should not be the excuse for not collecting and using this rich and significant reservoir of historical material.

Lastly, I would like to plead that the historians should take up the study of recent and even contemporary history. I know, I am in minority here, for the opposition to this is formidable. This field has been more or less monopolised by journalists, publicists and 'popular historians.' They often write to please or entice. They write with the pre-occupations of the present day in the forefront of their minds, and the result is that uncritical and at times adulatory and emotional picture of men and events is presented which commands general acceptance for decades. Later, when the historian turns to this field, he discovers a number of myths, falsehoods, half-truths

passing as history. Then his task to set things right becomes exceedingly difficult. It is not suggested that the historians are not unaffected by the pressures of class, politics, religion etc., but they would at least be using the tools of their profession and their approach is likely to be less sentimental and subjected to the austerities of their discipline. There is already enough unconscious bias in historical writing. Why add the conscious bias?



## Urban Growth and Urbanization in the Punjab 1849-1947

Sukhwant Singh\*

The problem of urbanization like that of increase in population appears to have been underlined in the Punjab for the first time under British rule. However, the study of urbanization in historical perspective in our country, though receiving increasing attention since independence, is still in its infancy. The relative neglect of urban history is partly due to small proportion of urban population in the total population and partly land revenue and water rates being chief source and of government revenue and agriculture, the chief occupation of the people, the official and non-official writings concentrated primarily on the agrarian problems. But due to some recent developments, the students of urban history nowadays are better placed than their counterparts about a decade ago. One of such developments was the formation of a body of professional historians known as the Urban History Group in 1978. Three years after its inception, this group became a registered body under the revised name 'Urban History Association of India.' Its objectives include the promotion of the study of urban history of India and abroad.<sup>1</sup> Under this renaissance, the present paper is one of the initial attempts to study the process of urban growth in the Punjab under British rule.

First of all, we must know what do we mean by urbanization. Sometimes urbanization and urban growth are jumbled. But the rate of urban growth is different from the rate of urbanization. If the growth-rate of rural and urban population in any unit of study in a given period is the same, the proportion of urban population to the total population will remain the same. This situation is called urban growth. When the growth rate of urban population is higher than that of the total population, the proportion of urban population to the total population will increase. This process is called urbanization. In simple words, urbanization is the movement of people from rural

---

\*Lecturer in History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

1. Urban History Association of India, *News-Letter* (Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1981), pp. i-ii and 36-39.

to urban areas and the resulting increase in the proportion of population residing in urban rather than rural areas. This process proceeds in two distinct ways : through an increase in the number of urban centres and through an increase in the size of urban population residing in each place.

Now, we come to another problem, 'what do we mean by an urban centre ?' Our understanding of urbanization is very largely based on the information available in the contemporary census reports. The first census of the Punjab was taken in 1855. Between 1855 and 1941, nine census reports were taken in all. In these census reports three standards were applied to decide the status of an urban centre. They were, existence of municipality, non-agricultural occupations for bulk of the inhabitants, and the population of five thousand and above.<sup>2</sup> The discretion, however, was allowed to the census superintendents in the case of big villages with a population of 5,000 and more to be categorized as urban centres.<sup>3</sup>

Urbanization is a feature of a civilized country. Its importance varies with the nature of the urban immigrants and the motives that incite them to migrate. In the evolution of human settlements when people reached the agricultural stage which involved them in permanent habitations and some accumulation of property, they began to feel the need of protection against enemies and hence formed towns. Next, for defence purposes came settlements, which were more or less commercial in their origin and were situated on the banks of rivers and along the highways. As the civilization advanced, towns grew larger and became more numerous. In some cases the towns grew outside the original walled limits. As population increased and mankind became thoroughly stationary, sites less favourable than those originally selected came to be occupied by new towns.<sup>4</sup> Defensibility was an essential condition down to the close of Sikh rule for the prosperity of all towns, particularly the headquarters of the chiefs. Towns became fortresses first and centres of population only afterwards. In the British times, the state of things vitally altered. In most of the towns, old walls were neglected

---

2. Bose, Ashish, 'A Note on the Definition of 'Town' in the Indian Census : 1901-1961,' *Indian Economic & Social History Review*, Vol. I, No. 3 (1963), pp. 84-94.

3. *Ibid.*

4. George, H.B., *The Relations of Geography & History* (London, 1903), pp. 38-42.



and the distinction between the town and suburbs decreased.<sup>5</sup>

The towns in the Punjab at the outset of British rule consisted primarily of three types: dynastic towns, pilgrimage centres and commercial centres. It is generally assumed that the nature of industrialization and commercialization determined the rate and character of the growth of towns. In the Punjab in our period we have no example of any town whose foundation was exclusively due to industries or the commerce. The only example of an exclusive industrial centre in India during this period is Jamshedpur which owed its origin to the Tata Iron and Steel Company. Only a few years ago, the Punjab government planned to develop Goindwal as the first nucleus industrial complex in the Punjab. The towns of the Punjab, therefore, were multi-functional towns.<sup>6</sup>

With reference to population the urban centres can be divided into a number of categories like small, medium and large. By 1855, the then territory of the Punjab had nearly 26, 210 villages. Besides the villages, there were 2,124 small towns containing from 1,000 to 5,000 inhabitants; 76 containing from 5,001 to 10,000; 32 containing from 10,001 to 50,000 and three first class cities each with more than 50,000 residents. The first city of the Punjab was Amritsar with a population of 1,22,184 souls. Next in numbers stood Lahore with 94,142 inhabitants. The third was Peshawar with 53, 294 inhabitants followed by Ludhiana with 47,191 inhabitants.<sup>7</sup> The number of large urban centres was relatively more in the well-developed regions. By 1868, the divisions of Delhi, Hissar, Lahore, Ambala and Amritsar had greater urban population than those of Multan, Rawalpindi and Peshawar.<sup>8</sup>

The medium and small towns formed bulk of the urban centres in the Punjab under British rule.<sup>9</sup> The small towns were so distributed

5. See, for example, Anand Gauba, *Amritsar (1849-1947) : A Study in Urban History* (Ph. D. Thesis, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980), pp. 1, 76.

6. *Alphabetical List of the More Important Places in the Punjab and Its Dependencies* (Lahore, 1919).

7. It may be added here that by 1855, Delhi was not a part of the Punjab: Donald McLeod, *Report on the Census taken on the First January, 1855 of the Population of the Punjab Territories* (Calcutta, 1856), pp. 20-21.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 21; R. Roberts, *Report on the Census of the Punjab 1868* (Lahore, 1870), p. 28.

9. McLeod, Donald, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

to form almost everywhere a market for the villages around. It was usual that within a group of villages the larger and the central one developed into a town with a flourishing market. In point of distribution, the pattern was similar to that of the large urban centres. The densely populated and better cultivated regions had larger number of medium and small towns than the hilly and sparsely cultivated regions.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout the period under investigation, the proportion of urban over the total population in the Punjab varied from less than one-tenth to one-seventh. The following table gives proportion of urban and rural population in the Punjab between 1868 and 1941 :<sup>11</sup>

Percentage of Urban and Rural population in the Punjab		
Year	Urban	Rural
1868	11.2	88.8
1881	12.6	87.4
1891	10.7	89.3
1901	10.6	89.4
1911	9.8	90.2
1921	10.3	89.7
1931	12.4	87.6
1941	14.7	85.3

As the statistics show, the two closing decades of the nineteenth century and first two decades of the twentieth century were unfavourable for urbanization. The period between 1881 and 1911 was characterised by the tendencies of ruralization rather than of urbanization, because during this time there was no marked tendency for the population to drift from the villages to the towns. It is often argued that agriculture being quite prosperous, there was lack of attractive occupations in urban areas to excite temptation of rural population to migrate to towns.<sup>12</sup> Partly because of natural calamities and mainly because of the expansion of cultivation, the movement of population in the Punjab between 1881 and 1921 was towards the occupation of desert lands which canal irrigation had rendered

10. See, for example, Oswald Wood, *Final Report on the Settlement of Land Revenue in the Delhi District, 1872-80* (Lahore, 1882), p. 85.

11. The figures are taken from the *Census Reports of the Punjab* for the years 1868, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931 and 1941.

12. Wilson, James, *Recent Economic Developments in the Punjab* (Suffolk, 1910), p. 21.



fertile. It was observed in 1921 that it was only when this process became slow that its crystalization in the shape of towns took place.<sup>13</sup> Till 1911, migration into the towns was mainly of unskilled labourers, business communities and educated people. After 1911, the number of people migrating from rural to urban areas showed an increase.<sup>14</sup>

Under British rule in addition to the expansion of majority of old towns, many new towns came into being. The new centres were primarily of two categories : administrative centres and commercial centres. After foundation, their growth and multiplicity of functions went hand in hand.

The British administrative structure stimulated the number and expansion of administrative centres. All district and tehsil headquarters grew in size. Those engaged in government jobs or private professions associated with them in the administrative headquarters. Simla, Lyallpur, Gurdaspur and Montgomery can be taken as examples. Some of the new features added to the urban centres under British rule were divisional, district and tehsil headquarters, railway stations, police stations, post and telegraph offices, military posts, border military police posts, road posts, dispensaries and hospitals, octroi posts, educational institutions, municipalities and factories. Of about 1,500 important places enlisted by the government in the Punjab, excluding Noth-West Frontier Province and Delhi territory, almost all had one or more of these features.<sup>15</sup> These channels had largely brought western ideas of urbanizm in the Punjab towns from where they gradually marched towards the villages.

The expansion of trade under the colonial infrastructure added to the prosperity of towns situated on the railway lines and metalled roads. Such centres grew mainly because of their favourable position on the trade routes. They had large markets for all kinds of goods produced and consumed in their hinterlands. Of these grains, cotton and oil-seeds were of foremost importance. Expansion and commercialization of agriculture increased the importance of small towns particularly those near the railway stations. These towns became the trading

13. Middleton, L., *Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I (Lahore, 1923), p. 107.

14. Calvert, H., *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab* (Lahore, 1922), p. 27; and *Report on the Land Revenue Administration of the Punjab for the Year ending the 30th September, 1933* (Lahore, 1934), p. 32.

15. *Alphabetical List of More Important Places in the Punjab and Its Dependencies.*

centres of agricultural produce in their hinterland. In these towns in addition to exchange of manufactures, the produce of every kind was collected, processed and exported. The *mandi* towns of the south-western Punjab which came into being in Lyallpur, Jhang, Sheikhupura, Lahore, Montgomery, Multan and Shahpur districts after the canalization and colonization of the region are good examples of this type. Pattoki Mandi in Chunian Colony and Okara in Nili Bar Colony were started in almost uninhabited spots. In a short time they flourished as good markets. They succeed in attracting large number of residents and some entrepreneurs to start cotton factories.<sup>16</sup>

The sociologists, nowadays, interpret industrialization, modernization and urbanization as co-related processes. But the major determinents of urbanization in the Punjab during our period were the means of transport and communication, greater commercialization, expansion of cultivation and establishment of canal colonies, and the availability of non-agricultural employment. The construction of the railways was of cardinal importance. The establishment of rail link usually resulted in an increase in the trade. The railways also created new urban centres. For instance, all the important market towns in the Chenab Colony were situated on the railroad. Sangla, Chak Jhumra, Lyallpur, Gojra and Toba Tek Singh were in the northern part of the Chenab Colony while Jaranwala, Tandlianwala, Kamalia and Pirmahal were in the southern part. Pirmahal was a new *mandi* while Kamalia, an old market centre, was developed into a big *mandi*.<sup>17</sup> The growth of these towns was very rapid. In the Rakh Branch Circle, for example, Sangla Mandi which was not classed as a town in the Census of 1921 became a municipality in 1931 with a population of about 6,500.<sup>18</sup> The following table gives adequate picture of urban centres in the south-western Punjab :<sup>19</sup>

- 
16. See, for example, Shah Nawaz Khan, *Report on the Assessment of the Urban Areas in the Old and New Mandis at Pattoki* (Lahore, 1932), p. 1; and Nur Muhammad, *Assessment Report on the Urban Areas of the Sheikhupura District* (Lahore, 1926), pp. 1-3.
  17. Kirpalani, S. K., *Final Report of the Lyallpur District and the Rakh Branch Colony Circle of Sheikhupura District* (Lahore, 1940), p. 7.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
  19. Khan, Ahmad Hassan, *Report on the Census of India 1931*, Vol. XVII, Part II, Table IV (Lahore, 1933).



Increase in the population of some towns			
Town	Population in		
	1931	1901	1881
Lyallpur	42,922	9,171	—
Sheikhupura	12,166	—	—
Gojra	9,779	—	—
Sangla	6,478	—	—
Chichawatn	4,387	—	—
Montgomery	26,614	6,602	3,178

Diversion of trade routes disfavoured some old towns. The problems of railway construction made it necessary to leave aside some towns. The diversion of trade routes led to the decline of the towns unconnected by railways. Even the benefit of railway link some years earlier also created differentiation in the growth of different centres. Jalandhar and Ludhiana being connected by railway earlier than Ferozepur showed higher growth than the latter. The construction of railways and metalled roads, and the construction of great canals decreased the importance of river traffic. It was a setback to the towns on the banks of the rivers. For instance, Goindwal and Vairawal on the river Beas were more important in pre-British times than under British rule.<sup>20</sup> Even the official predictions about the future of certain towns proved untrue. It was assessed in 1855 that Jalandhar with 28,422 inhabitants was not likely to increase and Batala with 26,208 inhabitants was likely to decrease. But both these towns increased in size under British rule. On the other hand Ferozepur could not grow as fast as it was expected.<sup>21</sup>

There were variations in urbanization both in time and space. The decades between 1921 and 1941 showed highest rate of urbanization. With reference to spatial distribution, the plain and river valleys were less urbanized. The uplands had maximum number of urban centres. Even within the uplands, the number of urban centres had direct relationship with the extent of outleaved area and the density of population. This is evident from the movement of

20. Davies, F. E. and Byth W., *Report on the Revised Settlement of Districts, Lahore and Ferozpur Territories of the District Officer in the District Division, 1921-22* (Lahore, 1922), pp. 67-68.

21. *McLeod, Donald: Report on the Census taken on the 31st January, 1881 in the Population of the Punjab Territories*, pp. 21-22.

population towards the western plains of the Punjab and relatively high increase in the density of population and number of urban centres there.<sup>22</sup>

To conclude, there was urbanization in the Punjab under British rule but the rate of urbanization was very slow. Urbanization in the sense of being synonymous to industrialization was very little in existence. Shopkeeping, trade, government service and agro-based processing activities were the only chief attractions to urban places. However, the awareness of modernisation and urbanism increased continuously.

---

22. In the Punjab as a whole, the density of population per square mile was 152 in 1881 which increased to 183 in 1921. In the north-western plains, increase was from 61 per square mile to 108. Maximum increase was in Lyallpur district from 12 per square mile in 1881 to 301 in 1921 : L. Middleton, *Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I, Subsidiary Table III.



## Causation of Urbanisation during the British Period in Punjab—A Case Study of Jalandhar

S. D. Pradhan\*

An attempt has been made in this paper to give an account of urbanisation as a process during the British period in the Punjab with particular reference to Jalandhar which was occupied by the British soon after the First Anglo-Sikh War.

The roots of urbanisation go deep into Punjab history and any attempt to see the various forces in clear array must place them in the perspective of time. Some of the scholars have emphasized industrialisation as the causation of urbanisation,<sup>1</sup> while some others have taken trade as a significant cause of urbanisation. It is true that these two factors play a valuable role in the process of urbanisation, yet there are a large number of other forces which play no less important role in the genetic process of urbanisation, and the relationship among them is complex. In the context of the Punjab, the process and growth of urbanisation have been so complex that it would be too simple to analyse the process of urbanisation in terms of any one factor. However, urbanisation in Punjab can be broadly divided into two categories—traditional and modern—taking the introduction of Pax Britannica as the cut-off point.

The pre-colonial urban centres had tended to be political at the core, their rise and fall often closely linked to the sponsoring political regime, though the addition of commercial and religious activities could give the urban centre a certain immunity from political vicissitudes. The traditional cities in Punjab have many common features. The streets are irregular in pattern, narrow and crowded. Even main thoroughfares are also not very wide and are often without side walls. The ground is completely covered by structures, except for the streets, and the interior courtyards of some dwellings and the

---

\*Reader in History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Sabarwal, Satish, 'Indian Urbanisation : a Socio-Historical Perspective' in *Process and Institution in Urban India* (New Delhi, 1978), p. 2.

occasional market areas. Religious places of various communities are also found. Sometimes, the battlements and moats of the pre-British walled cities survive.

In contrast to the patterns of the indigenous urban settlements, the former towns of the British period were laid on pre-conceived plans with definite functional areas. These towns are normally built around the traditional towns. In Jalandhar, the British urban area can be divided into three parts—military cantonment, civil station and railway colony.

Soon after Jalandhar was annexed by the British in 1846, the strategic considerations demanded the establishment of cantonment area where troops could be stationed.<sup>2</sup> The military cantonment is characterized by a fairly regular alignment of streets and comprise barracks with rows of living quarters for the soldiers and their families, separate bungalows for the officers, hospitals, churches and officers' club together with drill grounds and rifle ranges, ammunition depots and military supply warehouses.

The civil station originally contained the offices and residences of non-military branches of government at the divisional and district levels. Public offices, generally housed in strictly European style structures included the administrative headquarters, the tax collector's office, the police barracks and the jail.<sup>3</sup> It also had a civil hospital, an asylum for lepers, banks, colleges and schools, post and telegraph office, and a market to meet the needs of the population in the civilian station.<sup>4</sup>

The railway colony shows the regularity of place and high degree of separation between functional areas and economic classes.<sup>5</sup> The most distinctive features of the railway colony are more or less uniform, and the monotonous rows of brick dwellings, graded according to the wage-scale and occupational status of the employees. For the lowest paid semi-skilled workers, who were from the start invariably Indians, a single room with attached kitchen and enclosed courtyard was considered sufficient. These dwelling units were built in contiguous rows of ten and twelve. The quarters designed for the

---

2. *Report on the Administration of Punjab* for the years 1849-50 and 1850-51 (Calcutta, 1952), p. 72.

3. Trevarkis, H. K., *The Punjab of Today* (Lahore, 1931), p. 64.

4. *Jullundur District Gazetteer* (Lahore, 1904), p. 280.

5. *Jullundur District Gazetteer* (Chandigarh, 1978), p. 299.



intermediate grades of personnel, often including Eurasians as well as Indians, have more rooms. The two storey or single storey bungalows built for the employees with technical skill or managerial capacity and receiving high salaries, who at first were mainly British, stand amid spacious landscape grounds with small houses for the servants in the plan.

With the passage of time, the markets expanded and many factories of the small scale level were established. In the latter period of the colonial era, cycle parts industry and agricultural implement factories were established.<sup>6</sup> It would not be out of place to mention that trade also expanded during the British period in Jalandhar, leading to further urbanisation. It was provided with good roads and railway lines. It is situated on the main Grand Trunk Road, which was the main highway for trade and traffic between the Punjab and North-West Frontier.<sup>7</sup> It may also be pointed out that the British Government evinced some interest in the construction and maintenance of roads in Jalandhar.

To sum up, it may be said that British administration proved helpful in the urbanisation of Jalandhar on the modern lines. The British rule was responsible for the systematic introduction of a different pattern of urbanisation, which was characterised by the features of westernisation. A study of history of urbanisation in Jalandhar during the British period shows that the British established towns due to primarily politico-strategic consideration. To secure the British Indian Empire in the north-western area, they established cantonment and later connected it with a railway line to increase the mobility of the troops. However, the economic interest also played a significant role in the process of urbanisation of Jalandhar during the colonial period.

---

6. *Ibid.*, p. 233.

7. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1908), p. 85.

## Secular Traditions of Patiala

A. C. Arora\*

The word 'secular' literally means 'pertaining to the present world, or to things not spiritual'; 'civil, not ecclesiastical'; 'not concerned with religion'.<sup>1</sup> According to the American concept, secularism stands for absolute segregation between religion and the state. But in India, where religious traditions have invariably been dominant characteristics of the society, secularism has a different connotation; it implies that there should be no state religion and that the state should treat all the religions equally. It is in the context of this Indian concept of secularism that this study seeks to probe the secular traditions of Patiala.

Baba Ala Singh (1714-1765), the founder of the Patiala State, may also be given the credit of laying the foundation of secular traditions in the State. Although a staunch Sikh who had taken *pahul* from Nawab Kapur Singh and identified himself with the Dal Khalsa, Ala Singh was free from communal prejudices. He earnestly endeavoured to keep religion and politics apart as far as could be feasible under the circumstances of those days. In fact, he was at once a gallant warrior, a shrewd statesman and a liberal Sikh ruler. Not unoften he mediated to effect reconciliation between the Sikhs and the Muslim chiefs. For example, he exerted his influence to bring about reconciliation between Najib-ud-Daula (Rohilla leader who was the right hand man of Ahmad Shah Abdali) and the Sikhs, and between Zain Khan (Governor of Sirhind) and the Dal Khalsa; Ahmad Shah Abdali conferred upon him the robe of honour and insignia of royalty.<sup>2</sup> Ala Singh is said to be "the first Sikh ruler to initiate a non-religious outlook in administration."<sup>3</sup> He appointed a good number of Hindus and Muslims in the service of his State, of whom mention may be made here of Lakhana Dogar, Nagahia Khan, Mohammad Saleh

---

\*Professor and Head, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. See, *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* (Bombay, 1972), p. 1224.

2. For details, see Kirpal Singh, *Life of Maharaja Ala Singh of Patiala and His Times* (Amritsar, 1954), pp. 133-35.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 139.



Khokhar, Sardar Khan Rajput, Chaudhry Bir Bhan and Sahib Rai. "The Hindus were mostly appointed as *Dewans*, whereas the Sikhs were appointed as *Thanedars*".<sup>4</sup> Qazi Nur Mohammad, a contemporary Muslim writer, gives testimony to the fact that the Muslims were also his employees and the Hindus, too, were obedient to him.<sup>5</sup> He appears to have given full religious freedom to the non-Sikh subjects in his State, showing due respect for the mosques and the *mandirs*.

The secular traditions set by the genius of Baba Ala Singh were followed by his successors. During their reigns the Hindus and the Muslims continued to be appointed, along with the Sikhs, on high governmental positions and posts. Nanun Mal, an Aggarwal Bania of Sunam, was the Chief Minister of the State for a number of years in the early part of the reign of Raja Sahib Singh (1781-1813). After Nanun Mal, Mir Ilahi Baksh (a Muslim) and then Albel Singh (a Sikh) held the exalted office of the Chief Minister, whereas a Hindu, Ram Dyal acted as Chief Munshi.<sup>6</sup> During the last years of Sahib Singh's reign, when Rani Aas Kaur acted as the Regent, Misr Noudha, a Brahman, was appointed as her chief adviser. Maharaja Karam Singh (1813-1845) appointed him as his Chief Minister. After the demise of Misr Noudha, Barket Ali Khan, a Muslim from Oudh, became the Chief Minister.<sup>7</sup> All these examples, to which more can be added, suggest beyond any doubt that Hindus and Muslims were very frequently appointed on the highest posts in the State. The lesser posts in the civil and military administration were also held by persons of all the three communities—Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.

During the second half of the nineteenth century every Maharaja who succeeded to the Chiefship was a minor at the time of his accession. The arrangements which were made to run the administration of the State during the minority of all these Chiefs, furnish unmistakable proofs of the secular traditions prevalent in the State. It had been decided by the British authorities in 1859 that in the event of a minor heir succeeding to any of the three Phulkian States, a Council of Regency consisting of three trustworthy and capable ministers of that State would be selected by the Commissioner (British Political Agent) with the advice of the two surviving chiefs.<sup>8</sup> In accordance

4. *Ibid*, p. 143.

5. Nur Mohammad, Qazi, *Jang Nama*, p. 128.

6. Griffin, Lepel H., *The Rajas of the Punjab* (Reprint, Patiala, 1970), pp. 69-70.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 147-48.

8. Foreign Department, Political Consultations, 27 May 1859. Nos. 84-87, National Archives of India. Hereafter abbreviated as N.A.I.

with this procedure, when Maharaja Narinder Singh of Patiala died in 1862 leaving behind his minor son, Mahinder Singh, a Council of Regency of three able officials of the State was constituted. The officials selected were Jagdish Singh, Rahim Bux and Uday Singh.<sup>9</sup> Upon the death of Rahim Bux and then of Uday Singh, Mohammad Hassan and Fateh Singh were appointed as new members of the Regency Council. Likewise, during the minority of Maharaja Rajinder Singh, Dewa Singh, Charat Ram and Namdar Khan,<sup>10</sup> and during that of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Sayyid Mohammad Hussain and Bhagwan Dass,<sup>11</sup> acted as members of the Council of Regency.<sup>12</sup> It is obvious that all the three communities were generally represented in each Council of Regency, and the councils of Regency, taken together, had administered the affairs of the State for no less than thirty years (1862-1870, 1876-1889, 1900-1909).

By the beginning of the twentieth century the British authorities had started exercising a decisive impact on the internal administration of the Patiala State, as also on other Princely States. They desired that high administrative posts in the State should be entrusted to really competent persons irrespective of the distinction of religion, community or caste. They had even managed, very adroitly of course, the appointment of a number of Europeans on the administrative posts of great importance.<sup>13</sup> The young Maharaja (Bhupinder Singh) was also given education and training on western lines. Therefore, on attaining his majority, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh proved himself a highly enlightened and liberal ruler. Of the notable ministers and high officials appointed during his reign from time to time, the names of Daya Kishan Kaul (Prime Minister), Sodhi Sujan Singh (Foreign Minister), Khalifa Sayyid Hamid Hussain (Member of the Administrative Committee), Sampuran Singh (Diwan), Gokal Chand (Chief Justice), Bachittar Singh (Inspector-General of Police), Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan (Prime Minister), Liaquat Hayat Khan (Home Minister and later on Prime Minister) and K. M. Panikkar (Foreign Minister) are

9. Foreign Department, Political A, August 1863, Nos. 78-80 (N.A.I.).

10. Foreign Department, Political A, August 1876, Nos. 157-161 (N.A.I.).

11. Foreign Department, Secret I, January 1901, Nos. 67-73 (N.A.I.).

12. For details about the arrangements during the minority of all these Patiala chiefs, see A.C. Arora, *British Policy towards the Punjab States (1858-1905)* (Jalandhar, 1982), pp. 138-44.

13. For details, see A.C. Arora, 'British Policy Regarding Appointment of Europeans in the Native States of the Punjab, 1858-1905' in *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, March 1979, pp. 171-73.



worthy of mention.<sup>14</sup> These examples demonstrate beyond any doubt that very often the non-Sikhs were appointed on the highest administrative offices in the State. The appointment of Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan as the Wazir (Prime Minister) had been commended in some of the contemporary newspapers as a truly secular action.<sup>15</sup>

The Maharajas of Patiala had given full religious freedom to the followers of all the religions of the State. Although they had a firm faith in the tenets of Sikhism, yet their attitude towards other religions (Hinduism and Islam) was one of respectful deference. Maharaja Narinder Singh got built a *gurdwara* in the Moti Bagh (Patiala) at a place said to have been visited by Guru Tegh Bahadur at the initial cost of one lakh of rupees with an endowment of another lakh and a quarter.<sup>16</sup> He and his successors liberally patronised the Sikh priests. But at the same time, the Maharajas of Patiala evinced great regards for the temples of the Hindus and mosques and *dargahs* of the Muslims. Some of them had also unflinching faith in the Hindu gods and goddesses. The Kali Mandir situated on the Mall was raised as a result of the liberal patronage of the Maharajas. It is believed that some inner temples were constructed due to the patronage of Maharaja Karam Singh and Narinder Singh, whereas the statue of the goddess Kali was installed during the reign of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh.<sup>17</sup>

It is significant to observe that the Maharajas of Patiala had contracted matrimonial alliances with the Rajput States. For instance, Narinder Singh had married his daughter, Basant Kaur to the Rana of Dholpur; his second daughter, Bishan Kaur was married to Jaswant Singh of Bharatpur.<sup>18</sup> Immediately after performing the marriage ceremony of his elder daughter in 1909 BK (1852 AD), the

14. Sec. *Administration Report of Patiala*, 1929-30, 1932-33 and 1938-39 ; *Paisa Akhbar* (Lahore) 21 June 1910, *Selection from the Native Newspapers of Punjab* published in 1910, p. 561 ; *Paisa Akhbar*, 23 February 1911 and *The Tribune* (Lahore), 24-25 February 1911, *Selections from the Native Newspapers of Punjab*, published in 1911, p. 180.

15. *Paisa Akhbar*, 23 February 1911 and *The Tribune*, 24 Feb., 1911.

16. Fauja Singh (ed.), *Patiala and Its Historical Surroundings* (Patiala, 1967), p. 22; Shamsher Singh Ashok, *History of Gurdwara Dukhniwaran Sahib* (Amritsar, n. d.), p. 14.

17. Vide Information given by Secretary, Kali Mandir Management, Patiala.

18. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 238; later on the first marriage of Yadavindra Singh was solemnised to a Rajput princess and one of his sisters was married to Raja Surendra Singh of Nalagarh.

Maharaja proceeded on a pilgrimage to Haridwar, Rishikesh and Badrinath.<sup>19</sup> It is believed that on his return to Patiala, he brought with him the architectural designs of the famous temples visited by him, on the basis of which, in the outskirts of Patiala he initiated the construction of Tung Nath, Badri Nath and Kedar Nath temples. This was done for the convenience of those of his subjects who longed to visit these temples but could not afford to go to the far-flung holy places.<sup>20</sup> Maharaja Mahinder Singh gifted land of 90 bighas each to the important temples in the State. A recurring amount required for the upkeep of the temples was also sanctioned by him. In each of the temples a *pujari* and a *sewadar* were appointed who were deemed to be in the State service.<sup>21</sup> The Shiva Temple near the Qila Mubarak is also said to have been constructed under the patronage of the Maharaja.

It was because of the liberal atmosphere that many new temples were constructed in various parts of Patiala, the most notable being the Satya Narain Mandir, a temple dedicated to Lord Krishna. Due to the same reason, no fewer than fifteen mosques had come into being in Patiala by the end of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's reign. The Maharajas not only gave full religious freedom to the Muslims but also showed great reverence for the Muslim *pirs*. It is believed that Maharaja Mahinder Singh had brought Pir Baba Rodey Shah from Machhiwara to Patiala and often sought his blessings. After his death, a beautiful tomb or *dargah* was raised. The *pir* was revered alike by the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs, and is remembered as 'Garib Nawaz Sanjha Pir'. An annual celebration called 'Urs' is still held in the month of June in the memory of Baba Rodey Shah in which the people of all the three communities participate with great enthusiasm.<sup>22</sup> According to Dr Khushdeva Singh, personal physician and Medical Officer of Patiala during Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's reign, it is surprising to note that the number of *mandirs* and mosques was larger than that of *gurdwaras* in Patiala in those days.<sup>23</sup> He also informs that Maharaja Bhupinder Singh used to participate in the celebration of festivals of all the three communities—*Dussehra* and

19. Gian Singh, Giani, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* (Reprint Patiala, 1970), p. 616.

20. Information by courtesy, Secretary, Kali Mandir Management.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Information by courtesy, Haji Jan Mohammad, Gaddi Nashin, Dargah Baba Rodey Shah, The Mall, Patiala; also see *The Tribune* (Chandigarh), 25 November 1979, p. 5.

23. Statement of Dr Khushdeva Singh, Oral History Cell, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, File No. O.H.C. 50, p. 2.



*Diwali* of the Hindus, *Gurpurb* of the Sikhs and *Id* of the Muslims.<sup>24</sup>

In the matters of education also, the Maharajas of Patiala gave eminent proofs of their liberal and secular outlook. Master Ram Chandra of Delhi, a Hindu turned Christian, was appointed as the first Director of Education Department in the State in 1870; Lala Shiv Dyal and Sardar Bhagwan Singh were among the other prominent persons who held the office of the Director of Public Instructions afterwards.<sup>25</sup> In the educational institutions Urdu was the medium of instructions for a long time. In 1938, however, Gurmukhi was made compulsory in the primary schools.<sup>26</sup> Besides Gurmukhi, there were arrangements for the teaching of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic languages in the Mahendra College, Patiala and the Anglo-Vernacular schools in the State. There were two separate departments of Sanskrit and Gurmukhi in the Mahendra College which, in 1912, developed into two separate institutions—Sanskrit Vidyala located in the ground floor and Gurmukhi Vidyala housed in the first floor of the old Sadar Thana building in Sirhindi Bazar, Patiala.<sup>27</sup>

The Maharajas liberally patronised all types of educational institutions. For example, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh is reported to have donated Rs. 6,00,000 to Khalsa College, Amritsar, Rs. 5,00,000 to Hindu University Benares, an equal sum to Aligarh Muslim University, Rs. 2,00,000 to Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi, Rs. 25,000 to Tibbia College, Delhi and Rs. 10,000 to Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala, Ferozepur.<sup>28</sup>

The facts given above are not exhaustive but only illustrative of the secular traditions and trends of Patiala under the protracted Princely regime. Evidently, the Chiefs of Patiala, like most of the other Chiefs of this region, had risen above the communal prejudices, and by adopting liberal policies in administrative matters they gave unmistakable proofs of their practical wisdom and statesmanship. They were not oblivious of the fact that in the State where about 21% population consisted of the Muslims, 38% of the Hindus and an almost equal proportion of the Sikhs,<sup>29</sup> it would not be advisable to

24. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

25. See, File No. 229/C/1285, Education, p. 80 (Punjab State Archives, hereafter abbreviated as P.S.A.).

26. *Administration Report of Patiala for the Year 1938-39*, p. 127 (P.S.A.).

27. *Vivaran Patrika*, being Information Book of Government Institute of Oriental and Modern Indian Languages, Patiala (Patiala, 1970-71), p. 1.

28. *The Times of India*, 13 June 1932, p. 11.

29. In 1931, there were 6,32,972 Sikhs, 6,21,145 Hindus and 3,63,920 Muslims in the State; the remaining 2 or 3% of the population consisted of Christians, Jains etc. See *Census Report of 1931*, p. 167.

impose obnoxious restrictions upon any community. So they evinced due regards for the religious susceptibilities of the followers of all the three religions, granted full religious freedom to each one of them, and recognised no distinction of religion, caste and creed in the matters of appointments on Government jobs; cow-slaughter, however, had been prohibited in the State as it was bound to injure the religious feelings of a great majority of people. The liberal and secular policies of the Chiefs resulted in communal harmony and atmosphere of mutual goodwill and understanding among the followers of different religions. There were generally feelings of brotherhood and love among the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim subjects of the State. It is said that very often Hindu women along with their ailing children would stand outside a mosque with the belief that if a Muslim coming out after reading *namaz* placed his hand on or blew at the child he would surely recover from his disease.<sup>30</sup> Not a single case of communal disharmony, much less communal riot, has come to light in the history of the Patiala State before 1947.

---

30. Statement of Dr Khushdeva Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 1.



## Economic Exploitation of the Native States—A Case Study of the Kapurthala State

R. N. Vohra\*

On January 1, 1806 was concluded a treaty between the British Government and the two Sardars, Ranjit Singh and Fateh Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala, with a view to depriving Jaswant Rao Holkar, the Maratha Chief, the support of the trans-Sutlej chiefs.<sup>1</sup> This treaty became the spring-board for the proclamations issued on 3 May 1809 by which the Kapurthala State fell under obligation to assist and furnish the British forces with supplies of grain and other necessities demanded by the British army to expel an enemy that dared approach from any quarter for the purpose of conquering the British territory.<sup>2</sup>

It so happened that Raja Nihal Singh, who had succeeded Fateh Singh in 1837, failed to provide the requirements of the British army during the First Anglo-Sikh War. Consequently, after the termination of this war in 1846, the British Government placed the Kapurthala State under an obligation to render military service to the British Government in the same manner and to the same extent as that state was alleged to have done to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The service involved the furnishing of 700 horses and 549 foot soldiers which, at the rates then adopted by the British Government of Rs. 192/- for a horseman and Rs. 72/- for a footman, amounted to a demand of an annual tribute of Rs. 1,73,928/-. Sir John Lawrence, the then Superintendent of the Punjab states wrote to Raja Nihal Singh making a proposal to the Raja that he should pay the whole of the said tribute in lieu of military service if his entire territory including his south Sutlej possessions, were allowed to remain in his possession but a reduction in the said tribute, to the extent of Rs. 3500/- per annum

---

\* Lecturer, Government Mahendra College, Patiala.

1. Aitchison, C.U., *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* (Calcutta, 1931), p. 33.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

would be made if the British Government took over possession of the cis-Sutlej territory of Raja namely, the districts of Naraingarh and Jagraon which the Raja held under a grant of the year 1807 from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In pursuance of the said proposal the British Government took over the possession of the said cis-Sutlej territory and in lieu of this made a reduction of Rs. 3500/- in the annual tribute of Rs. 1,73,9,28/-.<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1847, the district of Nurmahal was taken over by the British Government and the remission of Rs. 7000/- was made from the said balance tribute of Rs. 1,38,000/-. Thereafter the state paid Rs. 1,31,000/- annually.<sup>4</sup> The total revenue of the state had been over Rs. 80,00,000 throughout the seventies of the nineteenth century. Thus over sixteen percent of the state revenue was straightway pocketed by the British Government.

In 1875, the British Government imposed an English Superintendent named Lepel Griffin to head and run the administration of the Kapurthala State.<sup>5</sup> The British Superintendent availed of every feasible excuse to offer the state money to the British Government.

In October 1887, the state offered a gift of Rs. five lakh to the Supreme Government as a contribution towards the expenses which were then being incurred in placing the North-Western Frontier of the Empire in a state of military defence.<sup>6</sup> In December of the same year the Kapurthala Administration, under the British Superintendent, further offered to maintain in a state of thorough efficiency for active service a force equal in numbers to that placed at the disposal of the Queen-Empress during the Afghan operations. The offer was accepted and a specially trained body of one hundred and fifty cavalry and six hundred infantry was maintained, ready at a moment's notice to march out and fight side by side with the British soldiers in any part of the world.<sup>7</sup> These troops were soon organized into the Imperial Service Troops. The state had fixed the annual assignment of Rs. 1,20,000 which was increased to Rs. 1,30,000 in 1910.<sup>8</sup> In the year 1910-11. the annual income of the state was Rs. 13,95,602 which

3. Basta No. 7 File No. 41 (Punjab State Archives, Patiala. Hereafter abbreviated as P.S.A.)

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies (1874-1875)*, p. 3.

6. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State (1890)*, p. 10.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Annual Report of the Kapurthala State (1910-11)*, p. 4.



means ten percent of the state revenue was spent for the maintenance of the Imperial Service Troops besides ten percent of the revenue given to the British Government as the annual tribute. The expenditure incurred on the Imperial Service Troops increased year after year, and by 1932 it rose to fifteen per cent of the total revenue of the state.<sup>9</sup>

The Kapurthala state was not allowed to manufacture opium in the State though a few acres of poppy were permitted to be grown for medical purposes. The demand of opium was met by indents on the British Government for Bengal or Excise opium and by importation of Punjab Hill opium. According to an arrangement made with Government the state was supposed to be with a certain number of chests of Bengal opium on privileged rates viz. Rs. 8-8 annas per seer and the annual supply was fixed 10 chests only of 1½ maunds each in 1911-12<sup>10</sup>. The number of chests went on increasing as the State consumption increased.<sup>11</sup> In 1932 the supply of opium to the state was 900 seers to which the supply of 200 seers of *charas* had been added<sup>12</sup>.

A considerable strain was imposed on the resources of the state by the requirements of Delhi Darbar in 1911<sup>13</sup>.

On the outbreak of the First World War, the Kapurthala State placed the resources in men and money of the state at the disposal of the British Government<sup>14</sup>. The troops of the state participated in the operations in East Africa in conjunction with their British Indian comrades in arms<sup>15</sup>. The state authorities made significant contribution in 1916-17 in terms of money in the form of War Relief Fund, houses, transport etc.

Besides it, six drafts, consisting in all of 250 men were despatched at various intervals, fully equipped and trained to replace wastage in the field.<sup>16</sup>

Of the contributions detailed above, the cash money totals upto 14 lakh 61 thousand and five hundred when the total income of the

---

9. Memorandum presented to the Indian States Enquiry Committee (Kapurthala, 1932).

10. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State* (1911-12), p. 9.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Memorandum presented to the Indian States Enquiry Committee (Kapurthala, 1932).

13. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State* (1911-12), p. 89.

14. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State* (1915-16), p. 7.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

16. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State* (1916-17), pp. 6-7.

Kapurthala State minus Oudh estates was 16,61,859. If we take the expenditure incurred on the war effort for the year, we gather the impression that the Kapurthala State spent the entire revenue of the year for the war effort and for domestic expenditure the state depended on the revenue from the Oudh estates which was Rs. 17,63,475.<sup>17</sup> In the year 1917-18, the state raised the strength of his Imperial Service Regiment to 1000 men and concurrently to furnish five percent of the enlistable population of the state to the Indian Army.<sup>18</sup> At the end of the year the state's share in the Imperial Service Troops totalled 3804, no mean figure for a state whose male population of military age fell short considerably.<sup>19</sup>

The Indian War Loan Collection for the state aggregated slightly over Rs. 5 lakhs.<sup>20</sup> The contributions made in 1918-19 amounted to Rs. 15,03,380.<sup>21</sup> Besides the state incurred expenditure on 5000 men, 28 mules, 22 camels and 12 horses.<sup>22</sup> During the year, the total income of the Kapurthala State was Rs. 17,85,468.<sup>23</sup> So, it seems the state spent the entire revenue on the war efforts, and for domestic expenditure depended upon the income of the Oudh estates of Rs. 18,99,166.<sup>24</sup>

The Kapurthala State had a net work of post and telegraph offices in its territories, owned and managed by the British Government and no portion of it was retained by the Kapurthala State.<sup>25</sup>

The state obtained its supply of salt from the British Government depots and it was imported into the state territory free of all state duties. The state was given no share from the income of salt duties. Similarly the custom duties realised on goods coming into the territories of the state were pocketed entirely by the British Government.<sup>26</sup>

The British Government had the sole right to levy income tax on commercial and business concerns within the territories of the

---

17. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

18. *Ibid.* (1917-18), p. 5.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Memorandum, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

26. *Ibid.*



**Kapurthala State.<sup>27</sup>**

The Public Works Department of the state spent the major portion of its budget in metalling or repairing the roads that connected the state territories with the British boundaries.<sup>28</sup> Similarly a huge sum was spent for the eradication of small-pox and plague in the state.<sup>29</sup> This consideration for the state welfare was to prevent the disease spreading into the British territories, as the wheels of epidemics know no bounds. The construction of such buildings as would serve the cause or interests of the imperial government were undertaken while other required constructions faced neglect or delay.<sup>30</sup>

It will be clear from the above analysis that the consolidation of the political hold over the Kapurthala State which followed the mutiny put the economy of the state subordinated to the economy of the British Government. The economic development pursued in British India materially affected the economic interests of the state. The policies of the British Government were framed not by consideration of the welfare of the people of the state, as they so often professed, but by the motives of advantages of the British Government. Even Maharaja Jagatjit Singh had to pay income tax to the British Government for the income accruing from his property in the British territories,<sup>31</sup> and the state had to submit its annual budget reports to the British Government.<sup>32</sup> The state was required to submit explanation for any increase in expenditure.<sup>33</sup> Every penny of the state was spent with the express approval of the British Government.<sup>34</sup>

---

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State (1877-1890).*

29. *Annual Report on the Administration of the Kapurthala State (1881-82, 1883-84, 1889-90).*

30. *Ibid.*

31. Basta No. 3, File No. 11. (P.S.A.).

32. Basta No. 1, File No. 15. (P.S.A.)

33. *Ibid.*

34. Basta No. 6, File No. 13. (P.S.A.).

## Office of Wazir in a Princely State, Jubbal of Simla Hills During the Nineteenth Century

M. S. Rathaur\*

The office of *Wazir* became hereditary by the end of eighteenth century<sup>1</sup> in Jubbal, a princely state, and seems to get currency later than the inception of *Thakurai* of Jubbal.<sup>2</sup> In the beginning, *wazirs* were appointed and removed at will by the Ranas.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps this office was open for every one who was worthy and influential.<sup>4</sup> They were given *haq-i-waziri*<sup>5</sup> and *khas* lands (revenue free unassessed jagirs) for their services, which they continued to hold, except for some intervals till the end of nineteenth century. However, they were not entitled to levy any cess.<sup>6</sup>

By the beginning of nineteenth century, the *thakurai* of Jubbal was divided into the following four unequal divisions.

Sr. No.	Name of Division	Families which possessed these divisions
1.	Burhal	Rana's Family
2.	Bitouri	Jhaink
3.	Chepal	Chandel
4.	Cheyta	Harriya <sup>7</sup>

\*Department of History, Himachal Pradesh University, Simla.

1. Moti Ram, Ms. *Mukhtasir Tawarikh Halat Rajvansh Riyast-i-Jubbal* (n.d.), f. 18.

See also, Bhagwan Das, *Tawarikh-Kohistan-i-Jubbal* (n.d.), p. 30. (Both are in the possession of Mian Goverdhan Singh of Jubbal); *Punjab State Gazetteer*, Vol. VIII (Lahore, 1910), p. 6. (Hereafter referred as MS., Moti Ram, Bhagwan Das and PSG, respectively).

2. *Settlement Report of Jubbal State* (1907), p. 6; now referred as SRJS. See also, PSG, p. 22.

3. *Correspondence Relating to Jubbal Affairs, 1833 to 1857*, Capt. R. Ross's letter (3rd June, 1816), now written as CRJA (in the possession of above mentioned person).

4. Family of Chandel which came from Bilaspur, enjoyed *wizarat* in Jubbal for its intelligence and influence.

5. It was one tenth of the land revenue realised by *wazirs* in their territories in lieu of their salaries.

6. CRJA., C. P. Kennedy's letter (15th June, 1833).

7. *Ibid.*, Lt. R. Ross's letters (13th June and 14th Sept., 1816).



The territories of hereditary *wazirs* constituted about eighty four per cent of the total area of *thakurai*. The Rana's division around the capital, was governed directly by the Rana. This was very small in area and constituted only sixteen per cent of the principality.<sup>8</sup>

The families which enjoyed *wizarat* were mostly influential zamindar families (cultivators), which had matrimonial and other social ties with the local dominant clans of zamindars. Among them Jhaink, Chandel and Harriya families are important. They enjoyed *wazarat* in Bitouri and Chepal.<sup>9</sup>

After the extinction of Harriya's family in 1806 A.D., Cheyta was incorporated in Bitouri division and came under the domination of *wazirs* of Jhaink family. Thus there were two families of *wazirs* served by Danghi at Bitouri and Prem Singh at Chepal. Danghi's *waziri* increased considerably so much so that it comprised of half of the Jubbal territories. Thus extension was at the cost of Harriya's division.<sup>10</sup>

Rana Paras Chand, who died in 1806 A.D., was a weak and unpopular ruler. He failed to control his subjects and *wazirs*. *Wazirs* had become very influential and powerful, as they were functioning independently in their respective territories. They claimed their *khas* lands as their personal property and at times failed to supply Rana's share in land revenue from their territories even after having appropriated eighty per cent of land revenue for themselves as their right which had become established and recognised by Ranas.<sup>11</sup> The land revenue was realised by *wazirs* in their respective territories till 1832 A.D., except for the period 1818 to 1826 A.D. They were responsible for fixing land revenue demand too. It was collected twice a year both in kind and cash.<sup>12</sup>

The land revenue of *waziris* was shared in the ratio of 4 : 1 with

---

8. *Ibid.*

9. *PSG*, pp. 6, 22.

10. *CRJA*, Lt. R. Ross's letter (14th Sept., 1816).

11. *Ibid*; See also, Walter Hamilton, Vol. I, p. 626; *PSG*, p. 6.

12. *Ibid*; See also, *PSG*, p. 25.

Rana as shown below :

Sl. No.	Name of division	Total revenue of each division in Rs.	Respective shares of Rana and wazirs in the ratio of 1 : 4	Net share of each holder in rupees
1.	Bitouri	5000	1000 : 4000	4000
2.	Chepal	3000	600 : 2400	2400
3.	Burhal	2000	1600 : 6400	3600 <sup>13</sup>
(Rana controlled Division)				

From the above table, it is clear that Rana was given twenty per cent of land revenue realised in each *waziri*. *Wazirs* neither interfered nor shared the revenue of the division under Rana. They, however, kept with themselves eighty per cent of the land revenue from their own divisions. Besides this, *wazirs* started exacting large number of cesses for which they were not entitled originally from the cultivators.

Till 1832 A.D., they had collected large number of cesses from the people. There was none to check and question *wazirs* about imposition of various exactions, a few of which are as below :

*Neisson*, Journey tax: Each house had to pay rupee one for *wazir's* journey.

*Puch*, Sickness tax : On illness of *wazir's* family, zamindars paid rupee one for their visit which was required.

*Buddi*, Birth tax : On a birth of a son to zamindars one rupee was offered to *wazir*.

*Purrer*, Marriage tax : When a zamindar married, he had to pay rupee one for it.

*Budi*, For sheering sheep : Each house had to pay two *seers* of wool every year.

*Purri*, Tax for death : On death in Rana or *wazir's* family, rupee one from each house was realised.

*Toute-Ke-Kurcha*, It was forcible exaction of grains from peasants for being richer than *wazirs*.

*Kerurie*, This was the tax taken from every person who visited market for making purchases ; *wazir* was paid a portion of each article and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  *seer* of salt.

13. *Ibid.*, Lt. R. Ross's letter (14th Sept., 1816)



*Sota*, Tax for dispensation of justice : Each party had to pay rupees six for deciding their disputes.

*Jubocura*, It was demanded from rich zamindars for possessing more than plenty. But they were expected to pay as much as they could afford.

*Chatti*, This was for *wazir's* wardrobe : Each village had to pay rupee one.

*Dolokura*, *Wazir* being considered a revered person was paid rupee one as a tax before being served with food. But this tax was more or less considered a mark of respect.

*Jeola*, Each village had to pay rupee one for *wazir's* sepoy.

*Dund-dand and loot*, Fines for defaults and crimes : For these *wazir* demanded money from the accused.<sup>14</sup>

To levy the above cesses and reduce wealthy zamindars in their respective divisions, *wazirs* used to maintain irregular village militia.<sup>15</sup> The raid of *wazir* Prem Singh on Pargana Hamil of Chepal *waziri* in 1832 A.D., and demand of *dand*<sup>16</sup> from the *seana*<sup>17</sup> of this pargana and other sixteen families of cultivators from the same pargana amply supports the above argument.<sup>18</sup> For their services the militia was given unassessed land by *wazirs*.<sup>19</sup> They commanded their forces to quell rebellion within and repel the aggression from outside.<sup>20</sup>

The magnitude of *wazir's* power and influence can be well judged from their positions occupied by them during the Gorkha rule. Amar Singh Thappa, the Gorkha General, entrusted *wazirs* Danghi and Prem Singh with the collection of land revenue. During this period oppression and burden of land revenue demand was very heavy which was collected through *wazirs* from the cultivators.<sup>21</sup>

14. CRJA, C. P. Kennedy's letter to agent to Governor General at Delhi (15th June, 1833).

15. James Baillie Frazer, *Journal of a Tour Through Part of the Himala Mountain...* (London, 1820), pp. 164, 166. (Hereafter written as *Journal of a Tour*).

16. It was a cash demand taken by *wazir* from the accused for their defaults and crimes.

17. The head of family or village and pargana also was called *seana*. So it was a generic term. *Seanas* of village and *pargana* were hereditary and responsible for revenue collection.

18. CRJA, C.P. Kennedy's letters (15th June, 1833); also SRJS, p. 7.

19. *Journal of a Tour*, p. 166; See also, CRJA, p. 2.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 166; and PSG, p. 6.

21. MS. Moti Ram, p. 41 and CRJA, Capt. R. Ross's letter (14th Sept., 1816).

After the expulsion of Gorkhas in 1815 A.D. by the British, Rana Puran Chand was given a *sanad* according to which his territory was restored to him and he was made to abide by the other terms of the *sanad*.<sup>22</sup> Puran Chand's *wazirs* were very oppressive and misruled the principality. They kept quarreling with one another for obtaining full control of the principality. Rana, a weakman, was completely under the influence of his *wazirs*. So, they had power and grossly misruled. Therefore, Rana failed to stand up to the terms of the treaty with the British government despite latter's several reminders.<sup>23</sup> This forced the British government to intervene in 1818 A.D. and to appoint an official to reduce *wazir's* influence and manage Jubbal *thakurai* for Rana. Thus, *wazirs* lost much of the influence due to their office.<sup>24</sup>

In 1826 A.D., Rana was left to his fate. He failed to show administrative improvements because the power continued to be exercised again by the hereditary *wazirs*. After Danghi, his son, Saj Ram at Bitouri and in other *waziri* at Chepal, Prem Singh began collecting revenue and functioning as chief executives in their respective territories. Thus, *wazir's* misrule was spread again in the country.<sup>25</sup> The oppressive policy of Wazir Prem Singh rendered many villages desolate and converted most fertile lands into barren tracts. The cultivators left for the neighbouring *ilaguas* fearing his atrocities; he harassed Rana too.<sup>26</sup>

Hereditary *wazirs* looked after general administration and justice in their territories. When the *wazir* dispensed justice to the aggrieved, each party had to pay rupees six (*sota*) to *wazir*.<sup>27</sup>

In 1832 A.D. when Rana Puran Chand found it difficult to rule due to misrule, oppression and influence of hereditary *wazirs*, he was

22. Aitchison, C. U., *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. I, p. 96.

23. *Records of Delhi Residency and Agency Punjab Government Records* (Lahore, 1911), p. 258. Now onwards cited as *RDRAP*. See also, Andrew D' Cruz, *The Political Relations Existing between the British Government and the native States and Chiefs as they stood in 1840* (Calcutta, 1862). Now referred as Andrew; Mian Bashir Ahmad Faruqi, *British Relations with Cis-Sutlej States* (Punjab Government Record Office, 1941), p. 49; *PSG and CRJA*, letters of Capt. Ross and C.P. Kennedy (13th June, 1816 and 15th June, 1833), respectively.

24. *CRJA*, C. P. Kennedy's letter (26th July, 1824, and W. Edwards letter dated 25th May, 1848).

25. *Ibid.*

26. *CRJA* (15th June, 1833).

27. *Ibid.*, and also *Administrative Report of Punjab and its Dependencies for 1898-99*, p. 7. (Hereafter referred as *ARPD*).



made to surrender his territory to the British government. The Rana was given rupees 4,000/-per annum by the government and Molak Ram was appointed as manager to administer the country.<sup>28</sup> *Wazirs* were deprived of their service and office. The land revenue was collected directly by the British through the newly created office of the *Lumbardar*<sup>29</sup> which continues to function till to date. Still it seems that *wazirs* continued to hold on their *khas* lands and were allowed to keep revenue from them.<sup>30</sup>

After Rana Puran Chand's death in 1839 A.D., *wazirs* struggled against the government for the restoration of *thakurai* to minor *Tika* Karam Chand. This move was aimed at to regain their position in the principality. Therefore, they mobilised influential persons in the chieftaincy and vigorously demanded the restoration through demonstrations. Despite rebellious demonstration in 1842 A.D., Karam Chand, the heir apparent, was not given chieftaincy just to protect people and the infant *tika* from the misrule and influence of the *wazirs*.<sup>31</sup> It was in 1854 A.D. that Rana Karam Chand was restored to his *thakurai*. After this, *wazirs* struggled against Rana for their hereditary positions. But Rana began the policy of abolition of *wazarat* by confiscating the revenue free lands of *wazirs* and punished them with exile from the chieftaincy.<sup>32</sup> So, he replaced *wazarat* with *thanadari* and appointed two transferable *thanadars*. Rana Karam Chand wanted to assert solely his sovereign powers or authority in the *thakurai*. When *wazir's* endeavours failed, they hatched intrigues against Rana. He was declared a weak and characterless ruler and complained to the government that his rule had brought the people and country on the verge of ruin. Through his propaganda they wanted to capitalize, but Rana was able to pin-point all concerned men behind this conspiracy. The Rana punished the conspirators by confiscating their property and

28. MS. W. Hay's letter to G.C. Barnes, Commissioner and Superintendent of Cis-Sutlej States (25th Oct., 1859), in the possession of Mian Goyerdhan Singh.

29. They are hereditary officials of revenue circle or village. Their duty is to collect revenue. For their services they were given 5 per cent of the State cesses.

30. MS: letters of W. Hay to Deputy Commissioner, Simla (25th Oct., 1859).

31. Andrew D' Cruz. See also, Gulab Chand Kapoor and Sons—*An Interpretation of the correspondence of Sir George Russel Clerk, Political Agent Ambala and Ludhiana Agency*, p. 221, and P. Milvile's letter to Secretary Government of India (27th Sept., 1853).

32. *CRJA*, letter of Lord W. Hay to Chief Commissioner Punjab, p. 26; See also, letter of R. Temple to Governor General of India (3rd March, 1855) and *SRJS*, p. 7.

sending them into exile.<sup>33</sup> However, on the government's intervention, and after obtaining securities from the *wazirs*, Rana allowed families of *wazirs* to re-enter their lands.<sup>34</sup>

It seems that Karam Chand was unwilling to revive the institution of *wazarat*, though British government insisted to appoint Kehar Singh as *wazir*. However, when he found that his *thanadari* system did not work well, he had to instal Kehar Singh as his *wazir* in 1860 A. D. with truncated power.<sup>35</sup> After sometime, Kehar Singh's death took place and this post was discontinued.

Due to minority of Padam Chand, the successor of the Rana, a State Council was constituted in 1877 A.D. to run the administration of Jubbal *thakurai*.<sup>36</sup> After his attaining maturity in 1881 A.D., the *tika* was enthroned and he revived the institution of *wazarat*.<sup>37</sup> He appointed Bhagwan Das as his *wazir*.<sup>38</sup> Since *Wazir* Kehar Singh, this principality had only one *wazir* which practice continued onwards. Bhagwan Das was very capable and intelligent. Rana Padam Chand being a religious man was mostly devoted to *pandits* and remained busy with his charity and alms giving activities. So he entrusted his *wazir* with all the powers to run the chieftaincy.<sup>39</sup> This *wazir* was a progressive man and wanted to run the *thakurai* on the British lines.<sup>40</sup> He divided Jubbal into three sub-tehsils and also appointed trained police officials. He made the first land revenue settlement, and encouraged and started realisation of the land revenue in cash. The department of forest was reorganised and many welfare projects like schools, dispensaries and roads were executed. Bhagwan Das functioned independently, but he always sought for Rana's approval in all matters. He restored the jagirs of *maufidars*.<sup>41</sup> During Bhagwan Das's time, the *wazir* did not appropriate land revenue like earlier hereditary *wazirs*. Now it was deposited in the treasury of the principality.<sup>42</sup>

---

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. MS. relating to Thakurai of Jubbal, p. 43.

36. MS. *Tarikh-i-Jubbal Riyast*, pp. 30, 33; See also, *PSG*, p. 7.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 34; also, *SRJS*, p. 7; *Tawarikh-i-Wazir of Jubbal*, p. 39; *ARPD*, (1897-98); *PSG*, p. 7.

38. He was a son of Wazir Saj Ram of Bitouri.

39. *ARPD*, (1898-99), p. 7 and *SRJS.*, p. 7.

40. *SRJS*, p. 7.

41. *Tarikh-i-Jubbal Riyast*, pp. 37-38.

42. *SRJS*, p. 7.



After Rana Padam Chand's death in 1898 A.D., *Wazir* Bhagwan Das was at the helm of Jubbal's affairs till 1900 A.D.<sup>43</sup> During the last years of his *wazarat*, he was charged for mismanagement and embezzlement of funds by the Rani. Before the report of enquiry could be made, he met with a fatal accident.<sup>44</sup> It appears that with his death hereditary system of *wazarat* came to an end.<sup>45</sup> After him Mian Durga Singh was appointed manager of the State in 1902 A.D.<sup>46</sup>

From the above following inferences emerge :

The ruling families of Rana, *Wazir*, Gorkhas and Britishers formed a class which had a common interest in the surplus produce of the cultivators in various forms, i.e., physical labour, kind and cash revenue. There was a constantly growing tendency on the part of *wazirs* to appropriate whole of the surplus produce and leave nothing to Rana. This endangered British interest too and invited their active intervention to ensure regular supply of *begaris* and strike a balance amongst all partners.

The limited extent of the principality perhaps restricted the activities of *wazirs* only to their own territories. It further helped them to strengthen their relations with local chiefs of dominant clans and thereby increased their power and influence. On the other side, the Rana due to want of communication, and some other reasons could not check the influence of ambitious *wazirs*. These factors finally contributed to transform an initially bureaucratic post into a hereditary office.

The Gorkha onslaught and every minority succession seem to have helped *wazirs* to improve their powers and influence both on Rana and in their *wazarats*.

During British paramountcy in this region the sharing of sovereign powers by *wazirs* was not like before. The introduction of new posts like *lumbardar* and to fill them up by local clanish chiefs falling below the *wazirs* in socio-economic hierarchy; construction of roads and finally depriving *wazirs* of their office, privileges and position tremendously truncated their power and influence. Introduction of the agents of change and active intervention of the colonial power helped by and large to elevate the position of Rana and to hold the sovereign powers solely by him in the chieftaincy. The *wazir* was made a state functionary under the authority of the Rana. Nevertheless, the basic class character and functioning did not change.

43. *Ibid*, pp. 7-8.

44. *ARPD*, (1902-3), p. 8 and *SRJS*, p. 8.

45. *Ibid*; *SRJS*, pp. 7-8.

46. *Ibid*.

## The Judicial and Police Administration of Hoshiarpur District under the British (1846-1947)

Narinder Jit Kaur\*

The district of Hoshiarpur was divided into four tehsils—Hoshiarpur, Garshankar, Dasuya and Una. Hoshiarpur, the administrative headquarters, is almost exactly in the centre of the district and lies five miles from the foot of the Shivalik and twenty miles from Jullundur cantonment railway station. The tahsils of Dasuya, Hoshiarpur and Garshankar comprise the alluvial plain and western slopes of the shivaliks up to the water-shed; the former however extends across the Shivaliks.

After the First Anglo Sikh War, Jullundur Division was ceded to the British. The ceded territories were divided into three districts, viz., Kangra, Hoshiarpur and Jullundur. The division was administered by Mr. John Lawrence upto 1848. Later on, commissioner of Jullundur Doab was made subordinate to the Resident at Lahore. After the annexation of the Punjab in 1849, the territory came under the Board of the Administration consisting of a president and two members. The executive staff consisted of commissioners, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners and extra assistant commissioners. All officers were vested with triple power—criminal, civil and fiscal.<sup>1</sup>

Hoshiarpur district was placed under the charge of a deputy commissioner who worked under the control of commissioner of the Jullundur Division. Below the deputy commissioner, there were one or two judicial assistants and three extra assistant commissioners. There were four tahsils in the district, each under a tahsildar, who was assisted by a naib-tahsildar. So far as the village administration was concerned, in each village, and in each *patti*, there was a headman or a *lambardar*. He received a *pachotra* or cess of 5% of the land revenue. His office was hereditary and his duties were laid down in the rules

---

\*M. Phil. Student, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.  
1. *Report on the Administration of Punjab* for the year 1849-50, p. 29.



under the *Punjab Land Revenue Act*.<sup>2</sup> Besides the headman, there was a watchman or a *chowkidar* in each village. He was paid Rs. 3/- a month by the villagers, who also provided him with uniform and a spear and a sword.<sup>3</sup>

Judicial administration formed important part of district administration. The law prevalent during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was customary. No distinction was made between criminal and civil cases. As there was complete absence of written law, the administration of justice rested on the common sense or whim of the authorities. Judicial decisions were made in accordance with the customary principles. The procedure was simple, (there being no distinction between ordinary, civil and criminal cases). The Maharaja was the highest court of appeal. At the district level, the judicial powers were given in the hands of *kardars*. At the village level *panchayats* were performing the judicial functions.

With the advent of the British, a systematic judicial administration was established. The Hoshiarpur district formed a civil and session's division under the District and Sessions Judge of Hoshiarpur. The Divisional Judge of Hoshiarpur was also Additional Divisional Judge for the Civil Division of Jullundur. Judicial arrangements were as follows.<sup>4</sup>

At the top, there was the District Judge who had no other but civil work to do. In other words, he was a full time District Judge. He had under him one subordinate judge with first class powers to take up original cases of the value above Rs. 1000/-. There were four extra assistant commissioners, each with the powers of first class judge. They were supposed to take up civil suits from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1000/- and land suits from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 1000/-. Sometimes there were one or two assistant commissioners or additional extra assistant commissioners with similar powers.

There were three *munsiffs* with first class powers at the headquarters of tahsils, namely, Garshankar, Dasuya and Una, and a fourth was permanently posted at Tanda. The four tahsildars had civil powers of third class *munsiff* within their respective tahsils and were supposed to hear land suits upto Rs. 100/- in value. There was also one honorary civil judge at Anandpur, with third class powers who

2. *Ibid.*, 1850-51, p. 50.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer* (Lahore, 1904), p. 166.

decided on an average about 400 cases in a year and had jurisdiction in the Anandpur and Nurpur *thanas*.<sup>5</sup>

The deputy commissioner as district magistrate was responsible for criminal justice. Both the offices were supervised by Divisional Judge of Hoshiarpur civil division.<sup>6</sup>

On the whole, the district was singularly free from serious and violent crimes.<sup>7</sup> Dasuya was the most criminal tahsil, especially the *thanas* of Dasuya and Mukerian. The common form of crime was burglary. Forgery and cheating were also probably prevalent but judicial convictions for these types of offences were difficult and comparatively rare.

The Britishers paid special attention in framing the laws. In order to temper the autocratic powers of deputy commissioner and secure reasonable uniformity in the dispensation of civil justice, a collection of rules, namely 'Punjab Civil Code' was prepared in 1853 and circulated as a manual for information and guidance.<sup>8</sup>

The registration work of the district was heavy. As usual, the deputy commissioner was ex-officio registrar, and each tahsildar was joint sub-registrar in his tahsil. There was also a sub-registrar at Hoshiarpur; a sub-registrar at Dasuya with a joint sub-registrar at Mukerian and another at Tanda, a sub-registrar at Garhshankar and one at Una tahsil with a joint sub-registrar at Anandpur. All the sub-registrars were non-officials.

The police played a very important part in the administration of justice. Some organisation or the other had always existed in the past for the maintenance of law and order and to attend to allied functions of the police but it was organised on a better basis by the British with a view to improve the police administration at district level—the British appointed a superintendent of police as the head of police. From time to time, the police system had been reorganised in accordance with the recommendations of the Police Commission of 1861, the second Police Commission of 1902 and the Punjab Provincial Police Committee of 1925 which submitted its report in 1926. Hoshiarpur District was in the Lahore Police circle. There were fifteen first class police stations in the district, each having a deputy inspector with two sergeants and three constables. In

5. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

6. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1908), p. 402.

7. *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer*, p. 166.

8. Travaskis, H. K., *The Panjab of Today* (Lahore, 1931), pp. 291-92.



addition there were two municipal posts, each with a sergeant and eight constables in the Bahadurpur and Khanpur suburbs of the town of Hoshiarpur. There was also a municipal post in each of the towns of Haryana, Anandpur, Garhshankar and Una. The police station jurisdictions of Tanda, Dasuya, Mukerian and Hajipur were difficult to manage in consequence of their proximity to the territory.

The institution of jails was a part of judicial system introduced by the British. The imprisonment had become an instrument of penal treatment with the initiation of a uniform system of legal justice in the country during 1858-1861.<sup>9</sup> Improvements were effected in prison administration from time to time on the recommendations of the different jail committees which were appointed in 1836, 1864, 1877, 1892 and 1919. The first Prison Act was passed in 1890 to regularise and administer the affairs of the jails, followed by the prison act.<sup>10</sup>

Sub-jail Hoshiarpur was established in 1893. It was under the charge of a superintendent of jail who was assisted by one assistant superintendent, the clerk, one pharmacist, one head-warder, twenty warders, and two sweepers.<sup>11</sup>

The district jail was of the fourth class and only short-term prisoners were confined in it. Those sentenced to longer terms were transferred to Jullundur. It contained accommodation for one hundred and nine prisoners of all classes. The prisoners were employed on oil-pressing, rope-twisting, making mats and money bags, gardening and menial duties.<sup>12</sup>

Chowkidars formed a part of the police organisation in the villages. He helped the village headman in maintaining law and order in the village. His duty was to help in the detection of crimes. He kept a watch in the village at night.

To conclude it may be said that the administration of civil and criminal justice was put on a sound footing. The cases began to be dealt with according to written laws and a set procedure. The police administration was reorganised and the foundation of modern police system was laid in not only the Hoshiarpur district but also in the whole of the province. But there were still many defects and shortcomings in the administration, including the police and judicial system. Much remained still to be done for removing the misery of the vast masses of population.

9. *Hoshiarpur District Gazetteer*, p. 201.

10. *Ibid*, p. 304.

11. *Ibid*.

12. *Ibid*.

## Phulkian Chiefs and the Revolt of 1857

Hari Singh Boparai\*

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rising power posed a problem for the cis-Sutlej states. In 1809, the Phulkian chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind came under the protection of the British government to secure themselves from the authority and control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>1</sup> By this treaty, the chiefs were bound to furnish the British force with supplies of grain and other necessities whenever it happened to march through their territories and to join the British army with their forces in case of attack from the enemy.

The cis-Sutlej area was governed by the Sikh chieftains of Phulkian lineage. They were the first to extend support to the British in the revolt of 1857. It was natural for the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, to help the paramount power. Some scholars on the basis of the British records have been led to believe that the revolt provided a golden opportunity for them to render service to the British authorities to win over their gratitude and then to procure the much-desired concessions from them. It was not surprising that the Phulkian chiefs vied with one another in helping the British.<sup>2</sup> On the close perusal of records, it is clear that the Phulkian states extended significant help to the British which either was due to their being allies of the British or was primarily due to their geo-political situation. The young Maharaja of Patiala was led by a senior member, the Raja of Jind, who could save himself against the local hostile population through the British support.

As soon as the Patiala chief heard the news of the outbreak at Delhi and Meerut, he marched with his forces to Ambala to help the

---

\* Lecturer in History, Directorate of Correspondence Courses, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Arora, A. C., 'Phulkian Chiefs' paper of Request (1853) in the context of their previous Relations with the British Government', *The Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, April 1971, p. 227.
2. Arora, A.C., *op. cit.*, p. 234; Krishan Lal, 'The Role of Maharaja Narinder Singh of Patiala in the Rebellion of 1857-58', *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, March 9-10, 1969.



British.<sup>3</sup> He sent his elephants, camels and other carriage for the transportation of European troops to Ambala.<sup>4</sup> From Ambala, he proceeded to Thanesar and placed there a strong force of 1300 men with four guns for the protection of the district.<sup>5</sup> He guarded the entire strip of 120 miles of the Grand Trunk Road from Ambala to Delhi.<sup>6</sup> The whole of contingent employed in the British cause during the revolt consisted of 2156 horses, 2846 foot, 165 officers, 970 camp-followers and 8 guns.<sup>7</sup>

Ambala, Ludhiana, Phillaur and Ferozepur were the major military centres of the British. The troops stationed in those cantonments were urgently needed at Delhi. They could not be moved, had they been isolated by the breakdown of communication. Besides guarding Thanesar and Ambala the authorities of Patiala kept the life-line open to free and unfettered movement of the British troops. Cave Brown's observation about Patiala ruler is significant : "His support alone ... was worth a brigade of European troops, to say nothing of the troops that he himself at his own expense, threw over the whole country."<sup>8</sup>

Patiala's role had a very depressing effect on petty chiefs, landed aristocracy, general population and more so on the Sikhs, for its ruler had become the natural leader of Sikh community after the fall of Ranjit Singh's house. Sir Lepel Griffin writes, "During the disturbances of 1857-58, no prince in India showed greater loyalty or rendered more conspicuous service to the British government than the Maharaja of Patiala. He was the acknowledged head of the Sikhs and any hesitation or disloyalty on his part would have been attended with most disastrous results, while his ability, character and high position would have made him a most formidable leader against the government."<sup>9</sup>

Services, rendered by the Maharaja of Patiala, were duly acknowledged and appreciated by the British government. About the

3. Griffin, Lepel H., *The Rajas of the Punjab* (London, 1873), p. 213.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*; *Punjab Administration Report, 1856-58.*

7. From Commissioner and Superintendent of Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 77, dated March 9, 1858, *Foreign Political Proceedings*, July 2, 1858, Nos. 182 and 193.

8. Cave Brown, Rev. J., *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II (London, 1861), p. 237.

9. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

significance of Maharaja's support, the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab expressed his opinion, "Had he proved false or even hesitated to join our cause when the mutiny broke out, the whole cis-Sutlej states would have risen, and our communication with Delhi would have been cut off. The Hon'ble Lieutenant-Governor has always looked upon the Maharaja's faithfulness at such a crisis as a turning point in our favour."<sup>10</sup>

These services were duly rewarded with the grant of the sovereign rights in Narnaul division of the former state of Jhajjar valued at about two lakhs of rupees a year.<sup>11</sup> He was one of the first Indian princes to receive the K.C.S.I. and was also made a member of the Indian Legislative Council during Lord Canning's viceroyalty.<sup>12</sup>

It may be pointed out that the King of Delhi implored the Maharaja of Patiala for help, while asking him to come with his army.<sup>13</sup>

At one point, Douglas Forsyth, Deputy Commissioner of Ambala, found the emissaries of the King of Delhi in audience with the Raja of Patiala.<sup>14</sup> Since the Maharaja had volunteered his services immediately after the revolt, the appeal was bound to fall on deaf ears. The Maharaja passed on the letter to the British authorities.

Sarup Singh, the ruler of Jind also supported the British. He was the first to extend his support even when it was not sought for by the British.<sup>15</sup> He marched with all his troops, about 800, towards Thanesar and from there to Karnal.<sup>16</sup> He restored peace at Karnal, Rae and Panipat.<sup>17</sup> At the instance of Captain Andrew, he sent a detachment to secure the bridge of Baghput on the Jamuna and ordered his cousin Punjab Singh, to escort Captain Hodson to Meerut for the safe arrival of the latter.<sup>18</sup> He kept the Grand Trunk Road,

10. From Secretary to Punjab Government to Secretary to Government of India, dated March 29, 1859, *Foreign Political Consultation*, April 29, 1859, No. 45

11. Browne, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 238.

12. Maljinder Kaur, 'Administration of Maharaja Bhupender Singh of Patiala (1900-38),' p. 3, (unpublished M. Litt thesis, June 1978, Punjabi University, Patiala).

13. Browne, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 224-25.

14. Malik, Salahuddin, 'The Punjab and the Indian Mutiny', *The Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, April 1974, p. 159.

15. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. Arora, A.C., *op. cit.*, p. 235.



the main line of communication and transportation safe from Karnal to the camp before the walls of Delhi. He was the only chief who was personally present with the British army before Delhi and fought many skirmishes with the rebels.<sup>19</sup> His soldiers also helped the British at Jhajjar, Rohtak and Gohana.<sup>20</sup> It was natural for the Raja of Jind to extend help to the British because he had not emerged from within the majority community of the locality. Foreign nobility of which he was a part in Haryana, he naturally threw his lot with the British.

Like all other chiefs, the Raja of Jind was also rewarded. Territory adjacent to his state to the value of above one lakh of rupees was given to him. He also received several villages in Thanesar district yielding 14,500 rupees annual revenue and in Delhi, the confiscated house of the rebels Shehzada Abu Bukir was granted to him.<sup>21</sup>

Nabha, the third Phulkian State, was ruled by a young Prince Bharpur Singh. On hearing a rumour of disturbances at Delhi, he proceeded from Nabha with all his available force towards Ambala, but while he was on his way, he was directed to march to Ludhiana.<sup>22</sup> Ludhiana posed a very serious threat to the British as civilians also joined hands with the rebels. When the rebels from Jullundur proceeded towards Phillaur to spread the revolt, the Nabha troops intercepted them and thus tried to help the British.<sup>23</sup> While at Ludhiana, he posted some of his troops for the protection of the road from Ambala to Ferozepur.<sup>24</sup> He provided the British with a force at Phillaur to escort guns and ammunition from that fort to Ludhiana and thence to Delhi. The Raja's troops also helped the British at Panipat, Ambala and Ferozepur. He advanced a loan of Rs. 2,50,000 to the British government.<sup>25</sup> A detachment of his force, about 300 in number, did good service at Delhi throughout the siege.<sup>26</sup>

19. Griffin, *op. cit.*

20. From Commissioner and Superintendent cis-Sutlej States to Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 65, dated March 3, 1858, *Foreign Political Proceedings*, July 2, 1858, Nos. 171 and 172.

21. Browne, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 240-41.

22. Arora, A.C., *op. cit.*, p. 235; Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

23. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

24. Arora, A.C., *op. cit.*, p. 236.

25. From Chief Commissioner and Superintendent cis-Sutlej States to Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, No. 69, dated March 4, 1858, *Foreign Political Proceedings*, July 2, 1858, Nos. 167 and 168.

26. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

But the Nabha troops were not enthusiastic about their cause. In the opinion of the Chief Commissioner of Punjab, they did not put up a real opposition.<sup>27</sup> Like the other chiefs, the Raja of Nabha was also rewarded. He was granted two important districts of Bhawal and Kantee taken from Jhajjar chief's territory to the value of about one lakh rupees a year, with other corresponding honours of etiquette, and an addition to his title.<sup>28</sup>

The Phulkian chiefs played a dominated and determined role in suppressing the revolt. The princes were the allies of the British and had an organized army which stood them in good stead.

---

27. From Chief Commissioner of Punjab to Government of India, June 2, 1857, *Foreign Secret Consultation*, Part I.

28. Browne, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 242.



## Land Revenue System in Kalsia State

B. S. Grewal\*

In the beginning, the land revenue system of Kalsia State was just like that of other Sikh *misl*s. The Sikhs took the revenue share direct from all classes on the land irrespective of rights and title.<sup>1</sup> During the first half of the nineteenth century, the State gradually attained stability and improvement under the British protection. During the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the present century, the State witnessed a significant British impact on its revenue system.

Before 1863, the land revenue of the State was taken in kind. The state's share varied from 1/5 to 1/2 of the produce. In 1863, the Chief of Kalsia introduced cash assessment for the first time. His rates were based on average receipts of grain during the previous five years and an assumed price of two *kacha maunds* per rupee with the customary *zabti* for all *zabti* crops. The rates for straw were fixed at four *annas* per rupee of corn for *rabi* and two *annas* for *kharif* fodder. These leases were given for three years but at the end of the term were renewed with a general increase.

Settlement operations were started by Lehna Singh in 1869. For the first time, the State's revenue records were prepared. The records consisted of *khataunis rubakar*, *shajra*,  *khasra* and some other relevant papers. The villages were surveyed and cultivators were declared as owners of the tilled land. Meanwhile, the Chief of Kalsia died and the settlement was not confirmed by any competent authority. In 1870, fresh leases were again granted for three years on the same basis as the previous ones. The revenue continued to be realised on these leases for another twenty years. In some villages, modifications were introduced, with the result that the demand varied each year. The result of assessment was oppression. The total revenue of Chhachhrauli tahsil was Rs. 77,233

---

\*Lecturer in History, Mahendra College, Patiala.

1. Baden Powell, B.H., *The Land System of British India*, Vol. II (Delhi, 1974), p. 678.

while Rs. 9489 were added as cesses. In Bassi, the total revenue was Rs. 51,901 and cesses Rs. 7426.<sup>2</sup> The cash assessment existed only in these two tahsils. Collection of revenue in kind continued in Chirak until regular settlement was introduced. In this area, the state's demand was 1/4 of all corn and 1/5 of straw.

Due to auction or bids from money-lenders, the revenue of many villages was raised. In 1890, the total revenue of Chhachhrauli tahsil had risen to Rs. 89,343. About 96% of the revenue was realised in Chhachhrauli tahsil during the years 1880-90 but only an average of 76% was realised during these years in Bassi tahsil.<sup>3</sup>

In September 1887, settlement operations were again started in the State. In February 1888, Arjan Dass, a *qanungo* from Hissar was appointed as settlement tahsildar. From February to October, crop inspection was completed and six months were spent in the training of the *patwaris*. In June 1888, Chhachhrauli and Bassi tahsils were divided into 28 and 16 *patwar* circles respectively. The *patwaris* were classified into two grades, drawing Rs. 9 and 7 per month respectively. Their number was raised to 9 in due course of time. The first grade *patwaris* were paid Rs. 25 per month. In June 1889, the *patwar* circles were reduced from 44 to 38. The *patwaris* were again classified into three grades and their pay was respectively Rs. 12, Rs. 10 and Rs. 8 per month.

In January 1889, survey work was started in the Kalsia State and by March 1891, all villages were measured. The measurements were made on the basis of a *kadam*, having 57.15 inches, in Chhachhrauli and Bassi tahsils. The area unit was a square *kadam*, which in *bigha* measure, was called *biswasi* and in *ghamon* measure, a *sarsai*. In these tahsils, *bigha* measure was prevalent. 4.8 *bighas* formed one acre and standard acre was equivalent to 484 square yards. In Chirak area, *ghamon* measure was common. All types of records were prepared, i.e., field map, field register, *khatauni*, register of mutations, statement of irrigation, list of revenue assignments, village administration papers and *jamābandi*, etc.<sup>4</sup>

The cultivators were declared as proprietors of their land according to Commissioner's order contained in letter No. 183 of 23 April and approved by the Kalsia Government.

---

2. *Punjab State Gazetteers, Kalsia State*, 1904, pp. 16-17.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.



For assessment purposes, the State was divided into various circles. Chhachhrauli tahsil consisted of six divisions namely, Bangar, Som Khadar, Jamuna Khadar, Markanda Khadar and Kandi. Bassi tahsil was divided into the assessment circles of Bassi Bangar, Darrar circle, Neli and Sotal. Chirak, situated in the Moga tahsil of Ferozepur district, was considered as one unit for revenue purposes. The state-share was not uniform for the whole State because of the diversity of land. The revenue rates for the Som Khadar circle were as under :

	Rs. A. P.
Cultivation	0—8—9 per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Gardens	0—8—0 —do—

This area yielded about Rs. 32,850. The unit of land considered for fixing the state-share of revenue was a *kachcha bigha*. The rate with cesses sanctioned for the same circle of Jagadhri was 6 annas per *kachcha bigha*. The rate adopted in Kalsia was 46% higher.

The revenue rates adopted in the Markanda Khadar circle was as under :

	Rs. A. P.
Aabi	0—13—0 per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Dry	0— 7—0 —do—
Gardens	0— 8—0 —do—
Rate on cultivation	0— 8—3 —do—

The rates with cesses sanctioned in the corresponding circle of Naraingarh being 6 annas, the rate adopted in Kalsia was 38% higher.

The rates for the Jamuna Khadar circle were as under :

	Rs. A. P.
Cultivation	0—5—6 per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Gardens	0—8—0 —do—

This rate was 13% higher than that sanctioned for the similar circle of Jagadhri.<sup>5</sup>

The Bangar circle was the largest in the tahsil. The rates were as given below :

	Rs. A. P.
Cultivation	0—6—3 per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Gardens	0—8—0 —do—

The rate adopted was 15% higher than that sanctioned for the similar circle of Jagadhri.

---

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

The Kandi circle was the poorest circle in the tahsil. The rates adopted in this circle were as under :

	Rs. A. P.	
Cultivation	0—4—3	per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Gardens	0—8—0	-do-

This rate was 8% higher than that of the similar circle in Jagadhri. The rates in the Bassi Bangar circle were as under :

	Rs. A. P.	
Irrigated (Aabi)	1—0—0	per <i>kachcha bigha</i>
Dry	0—9—0	-do-
Cultivation	0—11—3	-do-

The rates in this area were 52% (irrigated) and 32% (dry) higher than the corresponding rates of the similar circle in Khadar area.

The rates in the Darrar circle were 40% higher, in the Neli circle 33% higher and in Sotal area 75% higher than those in the corresponding circles of Khadar.

The rates in the Chirak circle were different from the rest of the State. The rate sanctioned for this circle was 2 *annas* 9 *pies* per *kanal* and an owner's rate of 2 *annas* per *kanal* on the irrigated soil with a *talugdari* allowance to the jagirdar of 6% on land revenue. The dry rate here was 74% higher than that with the cesses recently sanctioned for Moga.<sup>6</sup>

The total demand on each village had been distributed over the cultivated area without any distinction of soil, except in a few special cases or where irrigated rates were adopted in assessment. In 1903-4, the total income from land revenue was Rs. 1,55,033, payable in two half yearly instalments which fell due on 15th June and 15th December respectively.<sup>7</sup> The term of settlement was fixed at 22 years. The revenue was collected as in British territory and the *lambardars* received *panchotra*.

There were two kinds of jagirs. The main jagirs were those held by descendants of the rulers and their followers ; the second class of jagirs comprised the petty assignments granted by the chief or members of the first class of jagirdars either as a reward of service or for maintenance of institutions. Under the settlement arrangements, the jagirdar in fact, was a mere assignee of the revenue, taking part of what

6. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 25.



otherwise would go to the State<sup>8</sup>. The former class of jagirs was in the Chhachhrauli tahsil. The Jagirdars used to pay the cesses which amounted to 19% on the land revenue. Theoretically all such jagirs were held during the chief's pleasure but practically they were hereditary. When any jagirdar died without leaving direct heirs, the chief resumed 1/3 of the share with proprietary rights, the remaining 2/3 going to the collaterals. In case of failure of heirs, direct or collateral, the whole share used to lapse to the chief.<sup>9</sup>

In Kalsia, the *shamlat* land in all villages was not exceeding 25% of the total cultivated area of each village.

Land improvements and land acts for agriculturists were in force in the Kalsia State. The Punjab Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts were also in force in the State and the same principles of suspension and remission of land revenue were followed as in British India.<sup>10</sup> The Punjab Alienation of Land Act (1901) was also in force in the State, with all the principles embodied in this Act, since 1890.

A *patwar* school was opened under the supervision of Lala Anand Sarup from 15th August to 15th November, 1916 for the improvement of revenue system. Out of 24 candidates, 19 were declared successful.<sup>11</sup> The State government had started an agricultural farm, and Meston and Raja ploughs and other implements were introduced in the State lands.<sup>12</sup> The total revenue of the State during the year 1919-20 was Rs. 2,18,025. Under the Land Alienation Act, 11 minors remained under the court of wards during 1919-20.<sup>13</sup> In 1937, remissions, amounting to even 30% in some cases, had been made in land revenue demand of the last two crops on account of semi-famine conditions. The *chowkidara* cess was now collected only to the extent of the actual expenditure on the establishment maintained in the village for watch and ward. *Taccavi* loans were regularly advanced by the State to the needy.<sup>14</sup>

In 1939, Punjab Kissan Committee, with Bhag Singh as General Secretary, was holding a demonstration at Lahore in order to highlight the grievances of the poor peasants. Some peasants of Kalsia had started a campaign against the State Government's agrarian policies.

8. Baden Powell, B.H., *op. cit.*, p. 701.

9. *Punjab State Gazetteers, Kalsia State*, 1904, p. 26.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Report on the Administration of Kalsia State for the year 1916-17*, p. 24.

12. *Ibid.*, 1918-19, p. 32.

13. *Ibid.*, 1919-20, p. 34.

14. *Ibid.*, 1938-39, p. 5.

They decided to hold a conference at Ghoga on 24-25 June, 1939, inspite of legal prohibition. The agitators had defied Section 144, enforced to ensure peace and order in the area. Some arrests made and majority of them were released on their tendering apologies. This incident got great publicity in the whole of the Punjab. It also highlighted the various poor aspects of state administration. Due to the intervention of Punjab Kissan Committee and the generous attitude of Raja Ravi Sher Singh, the situation cooled down.<sup>15</sup> Similar agitation took place in Chirak *ilaga*. The people soon came to realise the real position and true facts and thus the agitation was stopped.<sup>16</sup>

Farmers were given loans from the State Bank for boosting up the agricultural production. Agriculture was the major profession of the people and also the main source of government revenues. The State was able to provide irrigation to 12,805 acres of State lands.<sup>17</sup> The Relief of Indebtedness Act had been brought into force in the State in 1938, which saved the agriculturists from considerable hardships and expensive litigation. 'Dam Dapat' was one of the basic principles of the Act, with fixed rates of interest on secured and unsecured debts. The State also tried to relieve the agriculturists from their debts by allowing them funds at very cheap rates of interest, payable in easy instalments. A fresh *firman* regarding *begar* was issued on June 15, 1938, reiterating strictest compliance of the previous orders in this connection. Cart Tax, which was in vogue on the Jagadhari-Chhachhrauli Road, was also abolished.<sup>18</sup> Twelve masonry wells were under construction for irrigation purposes in Bassi tehsil.<sup>19</sup> Facilities provided by the State during famine years, i.e., 1860-61, 1868-69, 1884-85 and 1890 showed the honest efforts made by the State Government for helping the people with money and material.

During the years 1940-41, land revenue remissions continued, where the crops were not satisfactory. The Government had established a permanent *taccavi* fund in the State. Rupees 1095 were distributed during the financial year 1944-45. Remissions in revenue were granted according to the conditions of harvests.<sup>20</sup>

15. Office of *Diwan* of Kalsia State, File No. 89 for the year 1939, Nos 6, 9, 47, Punjab State Archives, Patiala.

16. *Report on the Administration of Kalsia State* for the year 1938-39, p. 4.

17. *Punjab State Gazetteers Kalsia State*, Vol. XXXII, part B, 1934, pp 11, 111.

18. *Report on the Administration of Kalsia State* for the Year 1938-39, p 6.

19. *Ibid.*, 1940-42, p. 13.

20. *Ibid.*, 1944-45, p. 4.



It may be said that the authorities of the Kalsia State had reorganised the revenue department on the British pattern ; the land was measured and all relevant documents concerning the department were prepared. But, the state-demand was higher in the State than that in the neighbouring areas under direct British rule. The State government used to spend a lot of money on public welfare schemes like medical aid for men and animals, education, adult education, roads, street lights in cities, fairs and on other items of public interest. Keeping in view the economic resources of the State, the revenue policy can be safely stated to be satisfactory.

## Muslims During the 19th Century Punjab

R. K. Ghai\*

During the eighteenth century the Muslim supremacy was in turmoil and the first half of the nineteenth century was fraught with grave concern and anxiety for the Muslims. The East India Company had swept away the last vestige of the Muslim rule in India by exiling the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah II. In the Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh had already established a powerful Sikh kingdom which included a large portion of the North-West Frontier Province.<sup>1</sup>

In certain parts of the Punjab, especially in Karnal, a large number of Muslim agriculturists were, till 1865, worshipping their old village deities, though as Muslims they repeated the *Kalimah*, the Muslim profession of faith, and practised circumcision.<sup>2</sup> In the Punjab, the North-West Frontier and Jammu and Kashmir State, most of the uneducated and many of the educated were superstitious and disposed to running to dead and living saints for the fulfilment of their desires or for relief from suffering. They were spiritually dependent on miracles and magic to a degree incompatible with genuine belief in an omnipotent God.<sup>3</sup> Muslim society had already become largely Hinduised.<sup>4</sup> Many converts from Hinduism had brought into their new faith, ideas and practices which were contrary to the spirit of Islam. These 'uneducated converts' and their descendants differed little but in name from the Hindus.<sup>5</sup> These converts continued to worship the gods of their ancestors particularly the village godlings (whose rites were associated with the cultivation of the soil) and the deities of disease, especially *Seetala*, the dreaded goddess of small-pox,

---

\*Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Farquhar, J. N., *Modern Religious Movements in India* (Delhi, 1967), p. 5.
2. Majumdar, R. C. (ed.), *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance : History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. X, Part I, p. 883.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Mujeeb, M., *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1969), p. 10.
5. Hastings, James (ed.), *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 8 (New York, 1967), p. 896.



and to take part in the Hindu festivals connected with the changes of the season, such as Holi and *Dashara*.<sup>6</sup> The abiding influence of Hindu institutions on the converts to Islam was further shown by their rejection of the *Shariat* in favour of their old tribal practices in regard to marriage and inheritance. Most of these converts especially the Jats continued to follow the customs of their Hindu ancestors in preference to the Muslim law of succession.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, class distinctions prevailed within Muslim society during this period.<sup>8</sup> It had drifted away from the teachings of Islam and "had adopted ways and manners alien to its puritanic spirit,—a development which the spread of Sufistic ideas had, they believed, helped to a great extent."<sup>9</sup>

The Muslims were not only socially and religiously backward but economically also their condition was fast deteriorating. With the gradual decline and final extinctions of the Mughal empire, they had been losing all the old privileges which they had so far enjoyed; their prejudices against modern education had deprived them of all new opportunities of material progress and prosperity. Their only other source of livelihood—landed property—was rapidly slipping out of their hands due to their own improvident ways of life. Muslim community was steadily declining. There was no living movement of thought and no spiritual leader among them.<sup>10</sup>

However, the majority of the population of the Punjab consisted of Muslims. Of the total population enumerated in 1868, 93,37,685 souls or 53.02 percent were Muslims.<sup>11</sup> The presence of the Muslims in India can be traced to three different sources, namely conquest, immigration, and conversion. The vast majority of the Muslims of Punjab were converts. Their conversion may be assumed to have been due to one or more of several causes. Force was used on occasions, but the existing historical evidence does not enable us to estimate either the scale or the effectiveness of such conversions. Also, the risks involved in a policy of conversion by force should not be underrated. The teaching and persuasion by peaceful missionaries brought many converts to the fold of Islam. Persuasion, according

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. Ashraf, K.M., 'Muslim Revivalists and Revolt', *Rebellion 1857 : A Symposium*, ed. by P. C. Joshi (New Delhi, 1957), p. 78.

9. Majumdar, R. C., *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 140.

10. Farquhar, J.N., *op. cit.*, p. 5.

11. *The Punjab Census Report, 1868*, p. 22.

to fragments of evidences collected in the nineteenth century, played a much greater part than force. The lure of high posts or feudatory gains brought into the fold of Islam, during the Muslim rule, many high-caste Hindus. But, by far, majority of converts, who embraced Islam through persuasion of missionaries, belonged to lower castes or classes of Hindus to whom this religion brought that social equality which Hinduism had denied them from time immemorial.<sup>12</sup> During the prolonged Muslim rule the religious leaders of Islam enjoyed privileged positions and the Muslim masses were provided with greater facilities than were given to the non-Muslims. Under these circumstances the previous enthusiasm for missionary work evaporated. Gradually laxity accompanied by sloth and servilities among the leaders brought about degeneration alike among the leaders and the followers. With the decline of the Mughal Empire, the privileged position of the Muslims became a thing of the past.

The reaction of the annexation of the province by the British was bound to be very different on the minds of the people belonging to three major religions here. The Muslims naturally regarded the English as their bitterest foe who had usurped the political authority and the attendant privileges which they had so long enjoyed. The role played by the Muslims in general and Wahabis in particular in the revolt of 1857, was very much conspicuous of their hostile nature "to the English as those who have supplanted them."<sup>13</sup> The hostile attitude of the Muslims towards the English and their strong aversion to merely secular education kept them aloof from English education imparted in schools and colleges. However, the revolt did compel the British to review its religious as well as political policies in the province. The British had been patronising the Christian missionaries since annexation almost unquestionably. After the suppression of the revolt of 1857-58, when the British had openly declared their determination to destroy all those elements in the Muslim population which could serve as the nucleus of opposition, there was no other way of recovery except by accepting British rule. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) endeavoured, on the one hand, to prove that the Muslims were not by tradition or habit disloyal and, on the other, to convince the Muslims that the right course for them was to accept the British government and to rehabilitate themselves by co-operating with it and seeking service under it.<sup>14</sup> This was a realistic approach, and gradu-

12. Majumdar, R.C., *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 140.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 295-96.

14. Mujeeb, M., *op. cit.*, p. 61.



ally Punjabi Muslims followed the policy suggested by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. But when the Indian National Congress was established in 1885 and its influence began to increase among the Muslims also, a decision had to be taken as to whether the Muslims should follow the Congress policy of criticism and demand more opportunities of service under the government or Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's policy of seeking friendship with the British in order to strengthen their position. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan ultimately threw his whole weight against the Congress, and the British administrators tried to feel their way towards measures that could weaken the growing opposition.<sup>15</sup> When the agitation caused by the partition of Bengal began to gain momentum, it was thought opportune by the British administrators that the Viceroy should receive a deputation of representative of Muslims for presenting demands on behalf of their community. This was done, and the Muslim League was established in 1906. And immediately after some time in 1909 the British government accepted the long standing demand of the Muslims and gave them separate electorate. There is no doubt that the Muslim League was established to strengthen the friendship between Muslims and the British government but it is clear from the evidences that it gradually drifted away from the latter and came closer to the Indian National Congress in the following years.

During this period there are a few instances of Muslim conversion to other religions like Christianity and Sikhism. These converts mostly belonged to Hinduism who, for one reason or the other, had been converted to Islam in the past. The *Shuddhi* crusade of Swami Dayanand brought back many such converts to Hinduism. Likewise the Singh Sabha did the same job for the Sikhs which the *Shuddhi* did for the Hindus. In 1897, the Lahore Singh Sabha brought back into the Sikh fold over four hundred Muslims, who had gone over to Islam. One *Achhut* Conference was held at Jullundur, where many Muslim converts were brought back to the Sikh faith. Besides the reformation of the apostates, the Singh Sabha gained some fresh converts from Islam.<sup>16</sup> Apart from Singh Sabhas, some individual Sikhs were busy in reforming and gaining converts from other religions in the province. One such Sikh leader, among others, was Babu Teja Singh, leader of the Panch Khalsa Dewan, Bhasaur. In a *dewan* of the Khalsa convened on 13-14 June, 1903, in the village of Bakapur, Karim Bakhsh, a

15. *Ibid*, pp. 556-57.

16. *Report of Sri Guru Singh Sabha Tarn Turan*, January 18, 1937, pp. 2-5.

Muslim, and his family of four sons and a daughter were converted to Sikhism.<sup>17</sup> The *Vir Sudhar Pattar* of Lahore also mentions some born Muslims (non-converts) to have converted to the fold of Sikhism.<sup>18</sup> Likewise, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar* mentions the name of Sheikh Ahmad Din of Sialkot who was converted to Sikhism.<sup>19</sup> Muslims who converted themselves would not go to Hinduism. They preferred to go either to Christian or to Sikh fold. It may have been so because these religions, like Islam, taught belief in one God.

The period after 1857 was, no doubt, not conducive for the Punjabi Muslims. However, whatever their position was, the Muslims of the Punjab succeeded in maintaining their sizeable numerical percentage of total population.<sup>20</sup> This was due to the reason that whenever Muslim zeal to swell their numbers was provoked, Muslim missionaries visited the lower classes of Hindus, commonly known as 'untouchables', and held out before these unfortunate people the ideals of fraternity and equality which Islam promised, unlike anything they could receive under Hinduism.

---

17. Harbans Singh, 'The Bakapur Dewan and Babu Teja Singh of Bhasaur', *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. IX, Part II, p. 322.

18. *Vir Sudhar Pattar*, published by Sri Guru Singh Sabha Bhasaur, p. 67.

19. Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar* (Amritsar, 1965), p. 65.

20. *The Punjab Census Report*, 1921, p. 173.



## Forgery in Amritsar Butcher Murder Case 1871

Swaran Singh Sanehi\*

Creating history of the Indian revolutionary movements, entirely on the basis of the British reports, is a mistake, as these reports are not always reliable.<sup>1</sup> For the veracity of this statement, ample opportunities are provided by impartial study of files pertaining to the case under consideration.

Unfortunately, some modern historians, with pro-British inclinations, have been influenced by these official records to detestable degree in showing contempt for the revolutionary compatriots. Ambitious as they seem to have been to establish the legality of every British proceeding against the Kukas, they have surpassed even those alien rulers by fixing the date of attack on butchers at Amritsar as June 1870<sup>2</sup> i.e. one year prior to the actual one shown in the official records. By this anachronism, they have uselessly tried to establish that it was after a long search of about one year that the British police had succeeded in apprehending the real perpetrators of the crime.<sup>3</sup>

In the Kuka history, the year 1871 was conspicuous for the attacks on the slaughter-houses at more than one place which were considered "a direct defiance" of the authorities.<sup>4</sup> The Raikot butcher-murder case was disposed off sans phrase whereas that of Amritsar had been regarded a mystery that could not have been solved upto date. That was why, after the Kukas had been hanged to death, the court had felt the need "to perceive anything approaching to a connecting link between the petulant turbulence of the town's people and the firm though ruthless action of the Kukas when they took the matter in

---

\*V. & P.O. Shahpur, Punjab via Phillaur.

1. *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, 1976, p. 181.
2. Ganda Singh, *Kukean di Vithia* (Lahore, 1944), p. 118.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
4. 'Memorandum' by J.W. Macnabb, Nov. 4, 1871 in Nahar Singh, *Guru Ram Singh and Kuka Sikhs*, Vol. I (New Delhi, 1965), p. 146.

hand.”<sup>5</sup>

The Amritsar police eventually failed in tracing the real murderers which led the higher authorities to assign the duties of investigation to Mr. Christie, a British police officer, then posted at Jullundur as Assistant Superintendent since he was noted for his detective acumen. Ultimately, the Nihangs, *Bhatras* and the Hindus were falsely implicated in the case but why they confessed their complicity in the crime remained a matter to be conjectured by the officials until much later a date. Perhaps Major General R. G. Taylor was nearer to the truth when he opined that “the main character being that actual body pain and fear had been the predominating cause of his (Jai Ram’s) giving the false evidence.”<sup>6</sup> As a matter of fact, it was the inhuman torture meted out to the suspects that forced all of them to confess, sooner or later, their complicity in the crime.

The tragedy of the case was that a police officer of reputed detective skill had been deceived, firstly by the Kukas and secondly by his friends who had been noted *badmashs*. Consequently, a false case was framed against all the twelve innocents who were committed to the Sessions by the Deputy Commissioner, Major Birch on 25th of July 1871. None dared question the veracity of the proceedings of Mr. Christie though the Governor General himself had felt not very certain in his mind “that Major Birch had got the right men or is on the right track at all.”<sup>7</sup> Mr Christie was solely responsible for the fabrication of the case under the ambition of succeeding in solving the mystery which the Amritsar police had failed in. Convicting him of the forgery, Major Taylor had observed, “There still remains Mr. Christie himself and it will be asked how it was possible that he was duped, and indeed it will perhaps be suggested whether he was not a party to the fabrication.”<sup>8</sup>

In addition to fabricating the case, Mr Christie had committed two other blunders too. One—he had arrested and implicated the noble men of the city without any prior permission from the Commissioner or the Deputy, which was questioned by the Government of India<sup>9</sup>

5. ‘Memorandum’ by Major General R.G. Taylor, Amritsar Butcher Murder Case, National Archives of India, New Delhi. (Hereafter abbreviated as A.B.M.C.)

6. *Ibid.*

7. Government of India to Secretary of State for India, London, Aug. 17, 1871, A.B.M.C.

8. From Major R.G. Taylor to T.H. Thornton, May 26, 1874, A.B.M.C.

9. From E.C. Bayley to Govt. of Punjab, Aug. 10, 1871, A.B.M.C.



as it had injured the popularity of the government to a considerable extent<sup>10</sup> Two—he had left for home country on furlough without clearing the case of forgery pending against him.

Suspicion having arisen in the officials regarding the fabrication of the case, none could detect both the forgeries until, acting upon the injunctions of their Guru, the Kukas surrendered themselves in the court.<sup>11</sup> “A clue to the Amritsar case is supposed to have been obtained from the Raikot Case, but there is no denying the fact that nobody suspected the Nihangs and Akalis sentenced to death to be really innocent till the true murderers offered themselves voluntarily to be arrested by the Amritsar authorities.”<sup>12</sup>

No official record helps us to know that the Kukas had visited their Guru after the attack at Amritsar slaughter-house. The unofficial letter from Mr. J. W. Macnabb juxtaposes the truth wherein he concedes that the Kukas had “visited Bhaini in the interim”, and that four of them had taken part in both outrages.<sup>13</sup> Dishonesty and fabrication of the case of Amritsar had perhaps been disclosed before 26th of July since Mr. Cowan had, prior to that date mentioned it saying, “As at Umritsur, the opportunity has been embraced by dishonest men to give false information against those to whom they bear enmity.”<sup>14</sup>

The contemporary private sources are more informative and valuable as well as reliable in this regard because it seems that ‘Kukas’ sagacity was on the tongue of the masses which found naturally its way into some contemporary works too. Their accounts juxtapose the traditional version in vogue in the Kukas upto date.<sup>15</sup> “One day, a congregation of the Singhs had taken place at Ludhiana and they were meditating on the holy Name. Baba Ram Singh addressed, “O, Singhs, the Khatrees are being tortured at Amritsar. In case, you have done the deed, why are you fearing? Get up. One does not die two deaths.” Some Singhs got up accordingly...Beehla Singh of Narlee, Hakam Singh Khatree, and Jhanda Singh confessed their guilt saying they had done the deed to put a stop to the kine-killing.”<sup>16</sup>

10. ‘Memorandum’ by L. Cowan, D.C. Ludhiana, July 24, 1871, A.B.M.C.

11. *Majma-ul-Bahrain* (Weekly), July 22, 1871, quoted by Alam Nidhan Singh in *Jug Paltaoo Satguru* (Delhi, 1947), p. 143.

12. Harish Chandra, ‘Nandhari Movement’ (unpublished thesis lying with Swaran Singh Sanchi), p. 59.

13. *Times*, London, Feb. 9, 1872.

14. From L. Cowan to Commissioner Ambala, July 20, 1871, A.B.M.C.

15. Bhanu Dutt, *Guru Singh Itihas* (Lahore, 1940 B.K.), p. 316.

16. *Ibid.*

As per Guru's instructions, they surrendered in the court at Amritsar.<sup>17</sup> When they told the whole story to the officials and produced the blood-soaked weapons including *gundassas* and a sword, from the sack of *bhoosa*, they were sentenced to death at Amritsar.<sup>18</sup>

The innocents were released on 9th of August since, according to the official version of the case, Jai Ram—the approver—had retracted his confessional statement which resulted in the withdrawal of the case.<sup>19</sup> It is conjectured that the Kukas had appeared in the court soon after that day which prompted and encouraged Jai Ram and others to retract or which forced the police to release them there and then. The Singhs confessed that they had murdered the butchers adding why they had arrested those Khatrees and Nihangs. The Feranghis released them at the spot.<sup>20</sup>

Giani Gian Singh, another contemporary Sikh historian confirms that the Kukas had surrendered at the time of hanging of the innocents.<sup>21</sup> Though there is no allusion in the official records regarding the surrender of the Kukas yet the story of the release of innocents is almost identical in both the official records and the contemporary writings. Even the story of producing the Kukas three times in the court before passing the sentences to death is also identical.<sup>22</sup>

The forgery in the previous case had been brought about by many factors but the way of arrest and trial of the real perpetrators of the crime had been kept so secret that, it seems, nobody knew about it fairly and consequently, there was no hue and cry against the second and final act of forgery.

It was shown in the records that one Gulab Singh was arrested in the Raikot butcher murder case about one month after the attack in Amritsar. This man purported to be a Kuka, reportedly turned an approver and it was he who disclosed the names and addresses of all the murderers of Amritsar butchers. This story regarding Gulab Singh also seems to be a concocted one. Col. Taylor observed that the proceeding were sent for in the Raikot case, and were examined but there was no copy of Gulab Singh's confession with regard to the Amritsar murders filed with the Raikot case<sup>23</sup>. The official records

17. Chakarvarti, Inder Singh, *Malvendra* (Delhi, 1957), p. 282.

18. Bhanu Dutt, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

19. 'Memorandum' by R.G. Taylor, A.B.M.C.

20. Santokh Singh, '*Satguru Bilas*' (Ms), Sri Bhaini Sahib.

21. Gian Singh, Giani, *Panth Prakash* (Amritsar, 1970), p. 2821.

22. Santokh Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

23. 'Memorandum' by R. G. Taylor, A.B.M.C.



present a gloomy picture in that, barring a few members of the Council of the Governor General, almost all others were not interested in the probe of falsehood of the case in which the lives of twelve persons had been jeopardised. At an early stage, Col. McAndrew, then Acting Inspector General of Police, Punjab, had recommended a judicial enquiry which was never paid heed to.<sup>24</sup> A probe was eventually ordered by the Secretary of State for India which had pulled up the Government of the country.<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, the officials who had condemned the methods and outcome of the efforts of Mr. Christie, now started favouring him and opposing the fresh enquiry into his conduct. Different officials presented various arguments to save him.

The Lieutenant Governor who himself had earlier censured the police through the resolution dated 16th September, started giving the question a political hue. Alluding to the recent turmoils, he assured the higher authorities that no feud existed there at that time between the Hindus and the Sikhs while the fresh enquiry was projected to revive the same communal feuds.<sup>26</sup> Major Taylor had resorted to the viewpoint of the loyal men of note, who, as was expected, danced to the tune of their officers confirming "that the prosecution was given up, and the matter at an end, what they had evidently anticipated was a raking up of all the feelings, accusations and acriminations of those now nearly forgotten days with perhaps an added batch of fresh accusation intended to better Jai Ram's defence."<sup>27</sup> Bailie had joined him in thinking that Mr. Christie had acted throughout in thoroughly good faith.<sup>28</sup> Mr. C.M. Rivaz also expressed that "nothing has come out in any way leading to a suspicion of Mr. Christie's good faith in the conduct of his investigations."<sup>29</sup> But the fourth estate took keen interest in the enquiry. Indian public opinion of Lahore, for example, was emphasising the continuation of enquiry.

The Government of India, on the other hand, was determined to have full explanation from Mr. Christie on the subject of fabrication. The Punjab Government was accordingly asked as to why and how it happened that Mr. Christie was allowed to leave the country on furlough.

---

24. From Col. G. Hutchinson to L. H. Griffin, August 7, 1872, A.M.B.C.

25. Judicial despatch from Govt. of India to Secretary of State for India, London, Sept. 7, 1872, A.B.M.C.

26. From C. M. Rivaz to A.P. Howell, July 1, 1874, A.B.M.C.

27. From E.C. Bayley to T.H. Thornton, May 26, 1874, A.B.M.C.

28. *Ibid.*

29. From C.M. Rivaz to A.P. Howell, July 1, 1874, A.B.M.C.

On observing the lukewarm attitude of the Punjab officials towards that officer, the members of the Council of the Governor General had recommended the suspension of that negligent officer from the service and he was required to clarify the case before he rejoined the service on his return to India.<sup>30</sup>

The officials of the Punjab Government were aiming at inculcating Guru Ram Singh in these cases. All the witnesses, therefore, seemed to have been tutored to speak the officials' language in the court. The deposition of Gulab Singh was responsible for summoning the Guru at Bassian<sup>31</sup> (Ludhiana) in connection with the Raikot murder case where the approver was scolded and vituperated by the Guru openly to such a degree that, he dared speak no more.<sup>32</sup> The fact remained that the officials found it difficult to implement their intention.<sup>33</sup> As a matter of fact, the involvement of the Guru was suspected by three Punjabis, loyal to the Britishers and Mr. Cowan had dismissed the theories extended by all of them.<sup>34</sup>

There were many other absurdities in the said case, the discussion over which would require much space.

---

30. Judicial despatch from India, July 28, 1874, A.B.M.C.

31. Session Court Report for Bassian, July 28, 1871, A.B.M.C.

32. Santokh Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 386.

33. 'Memorandum' by R. G. Taylor, A.B.M.C.

34. From L. Cowan to Commissioner, Ambala, July 20, 1871, A.B.M.C.



---

## Development of Education in Jind State 1887-1898

Ajit Singh\*

Education in Sikh states of the Malwa region has been a neglected subject. However, Jind State remained lucky in this respect. It has a history of its own. The object of this paper is to review the work done in the field of education during the period of 'Regency.'

Maharaja Raghubir Singh left behind a minor grandson, Ranbir Singh, in 1887 A.D. To administer the State, a Council of Regency was established which had its tenure upto 1898 when the minor Raja attained his maturity.

Prior to the Regency period, education in the State was indigenous having two distinct forms namely religious and secular. The religious education limited itself to acquainting the pupils with scriptures of their faith and the old history and tradition. As three communities namely Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims mainly inhabited this region, they established their independent teaching centres. An altogether different centre working in the State was the centre for the commercial classes known as *Landa Mahajani* school where the students acquired the knowledge of maintaining the accounts. Female education was confined to religious training besides sewing, knitting, etc.

With the Council of Regency, established during the minority of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, commenced the era of imparting modern education in the State. Three regular government schools started functioning, one each at Sangrur, Jind and Sifidon. A Director was appointed to supervise those schools.<sup>1</sup> Besides the teaching of Persian, Sanskrit and Gurmukhi, Sangrur had the privilege of introducing English as one of the subjects of the school curriculum. Whereas at Jind and Sifidon, arrangements for teaching of English were not made.

As the political system of the Jind State was influenced by the British, the education in the State did not remain aloof from its impact. In 1889, the schools of Jind State were reshaped after the pattern

---

\*Lecturer, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. *Administration Report Jind State, 1889-90*, p. 111.

followed in the Punjab.<sup>2</sup> The division of the schools in different categories was made in the State. Primary, vernacular-middle and Anglo-middle schools came into being. Certain schools in the State were upgraded as upper primary and vernacular middle schools. Even at this stage there was no high school in the State.

Education was imparted from secular point of view. Punjabi in Gurmukhi script and Hindi in Devnagri script found place in the curriculum of the schools. However, these schools gradually disappeared due to the advent of the modern education in the State.

Though the education was not completely free still it was very cheap and the State encouraged brilliant students to go for higher studies. The following data is self-explanatory :<sup>3</sup>

	Rs. As. P.
Expenditure on pay, prizes, scholarship, etc.	8881-14-1
Average expenditure per student per annum	10-9-3

In 1894, the school at Sangrur was raised to the high grade and a boarding house was added to it. The number of persons working in the school shows that it was properly staffed. It had a Sanskrit and a Persian teacher with three under-masters for other subjects and a headmaster as in-charge. These people were well-qualified in the subjects and commanded respect for their honesty and hard work. Even the primary schools had a head teacher with three assistant teachers. Physical education was not neglected. The school at Sangrur had a gymnastic instructor.

The results of the State's efforts in providing education had been quite encouraging. The number of pupils which was 722 in 1892-93 rose to 885 in 1894-95. However, there was a slight fall in the number in 1900-1901. This shows that the people had not yet realised the importance of education.

The results of various examinations show the interest of the students in their studies. A critical glance can be had from the table<sup>4</sup> given

2. *Punjab State Gazetteer, Phulkian States*, Vol. XVII, 1904 (Lahore, 1909), p. 329.

3. *Administrative Report Jind State*, 1889-90, p. 111.

4. *Ibid.*, 1892-93 and 1893-94.



below for the years 1892-93/1893-94 :

Name of Dept.	No. of students	Appeared	Passed	Panj. Univ. Lahore Examination Pass/Fail	
Middle English	322/329	250/262	164/202	6/2	9/9
Middle Persian	77/110	58/76	50/58	-/3	—
Upper Primary	149/195	122/156	68/148	—	—
Nagri & Hindi	170/155	106/77	66/71	—	—
Gurmukhi	12/18	7/16	3/6	—	—
Total	730/807	543/587	351/485	6/5	9/9

Since 1892, 117 boys passed middle school or entrance examination of Panjab University, Lahore, 21 boys passed in 1900 as against 3 in 1893. In 1891-92, out of 657 candidates only 366 passed the upper and lower primary examinations, whereas in 1898-99, 648 candidates appeared and 546 passed.<sup>5</sup>

We can safely say from the above studies that the Council of Regency (1887-1898) paid adequate attention towards the improvement of education.

<sup>5</sup>, *Punjab State Gazetteer*, Vol. XVII A, p. 329.

## Managing Committee of Khalsa College Amritsar : Its Relations with British Government

Kashmir Singh\*

The Singh Sabha, a reform movement among the Sikhs, launched an educational programme during the later half of the nineteenth century. Khalsa College, Amritsar was established in 1892 by the leaders of the Singh Sabha. This institution was to act as a central institution of the Sikhs for the fulfilment of their social, religious and cultural aspirations.<sup>1</sup> The present paper is an attempt at examining relations of the Managing Committee of this College with the British government.

The Khalsa College Establishment Committee entrusted the management of the institution to a governing body, called the College Council, of over one hundred members, with an Executive Committee of 30 members. Sir William Rattigan became President of the College Council on April 3, 1892 with Sardar Attar Singh as its Vice-President. The Executive Committee, from among the members of the Council was elected on 18th December, 1892 and Bhai Jawahir Singh was elected the Secretary of the Council.<sup>2</sup>

Due to the financial problems, the condition of the Khalsa College, was not sound during 1900s. The patron of the college, Sir William Mackworth Young, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, strongly advised the abolition of the college classes and deplored the meagreness of finances.<sup>3</sup> The classes were not abolished, but under his advice, a small committee of thirteen members, called the 'Managing Committee' was formed for three years in 1902.<sup>4</sup> In 1905, eight more

---

\*Research Fellow, Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

1. For the aims and objectives of the Khalsa College see, *Annual Report of the Honorary Secretary of the Managing Committee of the Khalsa College, Amritsar* for the years 1913-14 (hereafter cited as *The Secretary's Report*, p. 4).
2. *Annual Report of the working of the Khalsa College, Amritsar* for the years 1976-77, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as *Annual Report*).
3. *The Secretary's Report*, 1904-05, p. 15.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 23.



members were added to the Managing Committee and its strength rose to twenty one members.<sup>5</sup> In order to place the Khalsa College on sound footing, the Managing Committee took a significant step by holding All India Sikh Conference on 12th April, 1904. The conference was presided over by Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha. As a result of the conference, the Sikh chiefs of the Punjab donated thirteen or fourteen lakhs of rupees for the college in addition to half a lakh contributed by the government. With the help of these resources, the condition of the college improved and extension work of the building was started.<sup>6</sup>

Though the promoters of the Khalsa College and their British patrons founded the college for purely educational advancement, the students and some of the teachers there could not escape the influence of the prevailing political unrest in the country. The C.I.D. officials reported to the authorities that the Khalsa College had become an important centre for inculcating national feelings among the students in 1907.<sup>7</sup>

To check the growing political consciousness and feelings of nationalism in the college, the Government of the Punjab reconstituted the College Managing Committee in 1908 so as to ensure better official control over its affairs. The new managing committee consisted of seventeen members : (i) government nominees—three; (ii) nominees of the Sikh States—six; (iii) representatives of British Districts—five; (iv) representative of the Sikh graduates—one; and (v) Ex-officio—two. The government nominees were : (a) The Commissioner of Lahore Division ; (b) the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar ; and (c) the Director of Public Instruction ; the former two being chairman and vice-chairman respectively. 'As a result, the college virtually came under the control of the government. The college received an annual grant of Rs. 10,000 from the Punjab Government for five years commencing from 1908, on the condition that the statutes and the constitution of the managing bodies were maintained in accordance with the wishes of the government.'<sup>8</sup>

The resentment was aroused among the Sikhs because they did

5. *Ibid.*, 1908-09, p. 1.

6. *The Secretary's Report*, 1904-05, pp. 2-3.

7. Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Movement* (Delhi, 1978), p. 8.

8. Petrie, D., 'Secret C. I. D. Memorandum on Recent Developments in Sikh politics', *The Punjab Past and Present* (Patiala, 1970), p. 315.

not agree with the managing committee to accept the government's control over the college. However, the Managing Committee of the college had been obliged to accept the interference of the government because it was difficult to improve the condition of the college without the help of the government.<sup>9</sup>

In 1920 came the storm of non-cooperation. When Mahatma Gandhi visited Amritsar, many teachers of the Khalsa College resigned and pledged to support the non-violent movement by propagating the gospel of Gandhi amongst the students and the people. The teachers of this college sent a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor to withdraw the government grant to the college before 15th November, 1920. The students also sent a letter to the Managing Committee of the college requesting them to follow the creed of non-cooperation as endorsed by the Sikh League and disaffiliate the college and refuse to accept the government aid.<sup>10</sup> The College Council met on 31st October, 1920 and passed a resolution as proposed. The Managing Committee of the college accepted the Council's resolution. Thus, the government control over the Khalsa College Managing Committee was removed and Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia was elected as its president and Sardar Harbans Singh Attariwala as its honorary secretary.<sup>11</sup>

During the world wars, the college has provided all possible help to the British Government. During the First World War, this institution had sent Rs. 1200 collected by the staff and the students.<sup>12</sup> During the Second World War, the college and the school staff had invested one-fifth of their entire provident fund, amounting to Rs. 53,740 in war bonds. The Khalsa College Managing Committee had invested Rs. 50,000 from its own funds during the year 1941-42.<sup>13</sup> Further, in response to the appeals of the military authorities, the college authorities had also presented them books for soldiers from the co-operative store of the college.<sup>14</sup>

---

9. The Honorary Secretary, in his report for the year 1911-12 said : "The prosperity of the Sikhs and progress may depend upon the help of government...", p. 1.

10. Bakhshi, S.R., *Gandhi and Non-Co-operation Movement 1920-21* (New Delhi, 1983), pp. 91-92.

11. *The Secretary's Report, 1920-21*, p. 7.

12. *Annual Report, 1917-18*, p. 17.

13. *Ibid.*, 1941-42, p. 12.

14. *Ibid.*, 1942-43, p. 16.



During the years 1930-40, the Punjab Government called upon the college authorities to send about a dozen students for propaganda work. Thereupon forty four names of students were sent; a dozen of them were selected by the Joint Chief Secretary and the Director of Information Bureau.<sup>15</sup>

As the war continued, a large number of students of this institution joined the army. To prepare the students for the interview, a class in colloquial English was started on 3rd February, 1941. Through the good offices of Macdonald, the then Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, a number of local Britishers volunteered their services for this purpose. Later on in 1942, the Maharaja of Patiala, the Chancellor of the College, asked the college authorities to open a regular preparatory class for emergency commissions in the college to be financed by himself.<sup>16</sup> The class sent up eleven batches in the army upto 1944.<sup>17</sup>

It may be concluded that the Managing Committee of the Khalsa College remained loyal to the British in order to get their cooperation for the spread of education among the Sikhs. The British authorities also helped the Managing Committee in the foundation and development of the college because they knew that it was in their own interest not to antagonise the educated element among the Sikhs.

---

15. *Ibid.*, 1939-40, p. 14.

16. *Ibid.*, 1941-42, p. 4.

17. *Ibid.*, 1943-44, p. 17.

## Factors leading to the Split of Arya Samaj in 1893

M. L. Thakur\*

Among the major non-governmental educational institutions, Dayanand Anglo-Vedic institutions have a unique place. These institutions have been imparting education to thousands of students in India.<sup>1</sup> All these institutions are run by Dayanand Anglo-Vedic Colleges Managing Committee, New Delhi.<sup>2</sup> But there is another set of educational institutions known as Gurukul. These institutions are also playing an important role in shaping the physical, moral and spiritual horizon of young men and women.

Both wings of Arya Samaj are the followers of Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83). They differ from each other on certain basic issues, which help us to understand the split within Arya Samaj in 1893.

Lala Lajpat Rai,<sup>3</sup> J. N. Farquhar,<sup>4</sup> Sri Ram Sharma,<sup>5</sup> Diwan Chand,<sup>6</sup> Heimsath, C.H.,<sup>7</sup> Kenneth, W. Jones<sup>8</sup> and J.T.F. Jordens,<sup>9</sup> have discussed in fairly lengthy detail about the issues involved in the division of Arya Samaj. However, these issues have not been sharply brought out by these authors.

One of the two major causes of the division was the scheme of studies, and hence educational. In the words of Rai Bahadur Lal

---

\*Department of History, Himachal Pradesh University, Simla.

1. The D.A.V. and Gurukul institutions are also imparting education in various parts of the world.
2. Though most of the D.A.V. institutions are managed by the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Managing Committee, New Delhi, yet some institutions are run by the local managing committees.
3. Lajpat Rai, Lala, *Life of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi* (Lahore, 1891).
4. Farquhar, J.N., *Modern Religious Movements in India* (New Delhi, 1919).
5. Sharma, Sri Ram, *Mahatma Hans Raj : Maker of Modern Punjab* (Lahore, 1941).
6. Diwan Chand, *The Arya Samaj: What it is and What it Stands for* (Lahore, 1942).
7. Heimsath, C.H., *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Bombay, 1964).
8. Jones, Kenneth W., *Arya Dharam : Hindu Consciousness in 19th Century Punjab* (New Delhi, 1976).
9. Jordens, J.T.F., *Swami Shradhdhanand* (New Delhi, 1981).



Chand,<sup>10</sup> "If one looks into the earlier reports and proceedings there does not appear to be any topic more engrossing..."<sup>11</sup> This problem was there even in 1883 particularly, in the mind of Pandit Guru Datta.<sup>12</sup> It was related to the Arya sponsored education and it arose in the wake of the beginning of the D.A.V. College movement initiated by the Lahore Arya Samaj in 1883. The most basic issue to Guru Datta and others was the degree to which the Aryan educational institutions should be "Aryan" or "Vedic" correspondingly, how far should they be "Aryan", and would be in the last analysis simply other version of the Government. Underlying this debate was clashing conceptualism of the Samaj, its meaning and the Dayanand's mission.<sup>13</sup>

Pandit Guru Datta was not satisfied with the scheme of studies envisaged in the future school and college departments. According to him the schools and colleges were not to be founded with the object of supplying clerks, judicial officers and engineers. Such professions fell far short of Dayanand's mission.<sup>14</sup> Guru Datta's ideas gave birth to a controversy over education among the members of the Arya Samaj. This controversy developed gradually, but persistently.

On January 31, 1889 Lala Ralla Ram representing Jehlum Arya Samaj and Pandit Guru Datta of Lahore Arya Samaj proposed a scheme of studies to the D.A.V. College Managing Committee of Lahore. According to this scheme all students would study Sanskrit and Arya *Bhasha* (Hindi), beginning in the 4th primary grade, take up various writings of Dayanand, including the *Satyarth Prakash* and his *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika* and finish with extensive study of Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*.<sup>15</sup> It was proposed in the same meeting by Pandit Guru Datta and Lala Ralla Ram that a Vedic library should be raised with the expenditure of Rs. 5,000, and Rs. 1,000 should be spent annually for purchasing books.<sup>16</sup> This proposed scheme was not seriously taken up

10. Rai Bahadur Lal Chand was the first president of Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Managing Committee.
11. Lal Chand, Rai Bahadur, "The Growth and Development of Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, during the last 25 years (i.e. 1886-1911)," *Golden Jubilee Commemoration Volume, D.A.V. College Jullundur* (Jullundur, 1969), p. 123.
12. Pandit Guru Datta was born on April 26, 1864. He joined Multan Arya Samaj in 1880. Later on he joined Lahore Arya Samaj. He was appointed in Government College, Lahore in 1886 and was the first Indian professor of Science in Government College. He died on March 19, 1890.
13. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 90.
14. Lajpat Rai, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
15. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 90.
16. Sharma, Sri Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

by the Managing Committee of the college.

In the last months of 1889, Pandit Guru Datta's health broke down and he died on March 19, 1890.<sup>17</sup> Though, it was a big loss for Arya Samaj, particularly to the group of above mentioned 'Sanskritists', yet the latter continued to be insisting upon the view point regarding education. Lala Munshi Ram<sup>18</sup> an active member of Jullundur Arya Samaj, carried his principles. He, with the help of others who favoured Sanskrit, continued the struggle for a Sanskritic orientation in the scheme of studies.

In the meeting of the college society<sup>19</sup> at Lahore on June 1, 1890, it was proposed that *Satyarthi Prakash* and *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika* (Hindi portion only), should be introduced up to the primary and middle classes. The next Sanskrit portion of the above mentioned Vedas should be introduced in the curriculum of the study of upper classes or college classes. The society also resolved that this proposal would be put up to the Managing Committee without whose permission it could not be implemented.<sup>20</sup>

In 1891, the 'Sanskritists' called for the creation of a Vedic department and moved that both science and English be made optional subjects. These two proposals were rejected by the Managing Committee. However, this failure did not affect their strength.

In May 1892, efforts were made by the 'Sanskritists' to get implemented the scheme of studies suggested by the college society, but their efforts bore no fruit. It created bitterness among the members of the Arya Samaj.

The second important cause which led to the split of Arya Samaj was the meat-eating issue. In 1885, two years after the death of Swami Dayanand, the protection of cattle started agitating the minds of many Arya Samajees.<sup>21</sup> Swami Dayanand had himself started

17. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 91.

18. Munshi Ram was born at Talwan in Jullundur district. In 1885, he started his practice as a lawyer at Jullundur and became the president of Jullundur Arya Samaj. After the death of Guru Datta in 1890, he carried out his principles and founded later on in 1902, a *gurukul* at Kangri. He was also known as Swami Shraddhanand.

19. The college society was consisted of some of the teachers and the prominent members of Lahore Arya Samaj.

20. Sharma, Sri Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 62. The split was averted for the time being by the tactical incorporation of the arguments of the 'Sanskritists' in the proposal to be sent by the college society to the Managing Committee of the college.

21. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 168.



the *Goraksha Sabhas* or cow protection societies to protect kine and upheld the moral superiority of vegetarianism.

In 1884, Arya's publications calling for protection of cattle, cited Dayanand's arguments from the tract, *Gokaruna Nidhi* and elaborated them.<sup>22</sup> In 1885, the issue of kine became fused with the question of meat-eating. Some of the Aryas argued through the *Arya Patrika* that the cow was undoubtedly more useful and rendered more important services than other animals, but there was no reason as to why the less significant animals like sheep and goats should be slaughtered.<sup>23</sup>

The question of cow protection raised another problem. After 1887, the advocacy of cow protection and vegetarianism by Samaj members and Arya journals raised the question, whether the Samaj as an organisation supported formally these two causes. The Samaj was separated from the cow-protection movement, but many Aryas had been passionately advocating cow protection and believed that vegetarianism was the mark of a moral man. Led by Durga Prasad, Lala Atma Ram, and Lala Munshi Ram, the defenders of vegetarianism produced a steady stream of tracts and pamphlets declaring eating as immoral.<sup>24</sup>

In the year 1889, a vegetarian society was formed by Lala Durga Prasad.<sup>25</sup> He was supported by the prominent Arya Samajees, like Munshi Ram and Guru Datta. Throughout the year 1889, this issue was hotly debated among the Arya Samaj members. In the meantime Quetta Arya Samaj passed a resolution that no flesh-eater would be admitted as a member of the Arya Samaj.<sup>26</sup> Two prominent leaders of the Lahore Arya Samaj, Lala Hans Raj and Lala Mul Raj<sup>27</sup> were against this resolution.

This issue was complicated when it was interpreted with reference to the principles of the Arya Samaj which were formed in 1877 at Lahore. In 1892, Lala Mul Raj spoke about it in his own words, "A person who agrees to act according to the *niyams* of the Arya Samaj ...

22. 'Regeneration of Arya Varta,' June 30, 1884, pp 1-2.

23. *Arya Patrika*, September 26, 1885, p 34.

24. Jones, Kenneth W., *op cit*, p. 169.

25. *The Tribune*, Lahore, September 14, 1889, p. 5.

26. Jambunathan, M. R. (ed.), *Swami Shraddhanand* (Bombay, 1961), p. 121.

27. Lala Mul Raj was the first president of Arya Samaj Lahore which was founded in 1877. He, with the help of Lala Sain Dass and Lala Jiwan Dass, had prepared the constitution of Lahore Arya Samaj.

... is not required to believe in the articles of faith as detailed in the *Mantavya* of Swami Dayanand Saraswati or in the philosophical tenets, theories and doctrines produced in his work. Nor is he asked to acknowledge the *Bhashya* (commentary) of Swami Dayanand on the Vedas as true and free from mistakes, or to accept him as an infallible guide.'<sup>28</sup>

Thus, for Mul Raj the issue of meat-eating was linked with the question of the nature of the constitution and ideology of the Samaj. It raised certain fundamental questions regarding the nature of Dayanand's works as well as his position, viz-a-viz, the constitution of the Samaj. For Mul Raj, the principles of the Samaj as laid down in the constitution of the Lahore Arya Samaj in 1877, were supreme and Dayanand was not infallible. On the other hand a group of Aryas led by Durga Prasad and Munshi Ram opposed Mul Raj's views saying that membership in the Arya Samaj also required adoption of standards set by Dayanand including principles of Lahore Arya Samaj.<sup>29</sup>

The controversy about the creed of Arya Samaj was the immediate cause of split which is known as 'struggle for power.'<sup>30</sup> In March 1893, Munshi Ram who was the president of Jullundur Arya Samaj made an attempt to restrict the membership of non-vegetarians in the Pratinidhi Sabha.<sup>31</sup> But he could not succeed. In August 1893, Lala Hans Raj on the advice of his close friend, Lala Radha Kishan, resigned his position as the president of the Lahore Arya Samaj.<sup>32</sup> Lala Lajpat Rai who was an active member of the Arya Samaj was proposed for the presidentship. But he was strongly opposed by Lala Durga Prasad, a member of vegetarian group. In September 1893, the elections were held for the presidentship of the Lahore Arya Samaj. Lala Durga Prasad was elected as the president. With this defeat, non-vegetarians withdrew from Antrang Sabha<sup>33</sup> and the Lahore Arya Samaj.<sup>34</sup>

The non-vegetarians immediately founded a rival Samaj in Anarkali

28. Mul Raj, 'Principles of Arya Samaj' in *Swami Dayanand Commemoration Volume* (ed.), H. B. Sarda (Ajmer, 1933), p. 235.

29. Heimsath, C. H., *op. cit.*, p. 294.

30. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 92.

31. Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha consisted of the representatives of all the Arya Samaj-s of the Punjab.

32. Jones, Kenneth W., *op. cit.*, p. 171.

33. Antrang Sabha was an executive committee of the Lahore Arya Samaj.

34. Sharma, Sri Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 65.



at Lahore. They elected Lala Lajpat Rai, President, Lala Sangam Lal, Vice-President and Lala Budh Mul as a Secretary.<sup>35</sup> Besides these two primary causes, there were some other causes which led Arya Samaj towards the split. These causes can be better understood in terms of the personality clash among the Samaj leaders as well as in terms of ideological positions.

In 1888 the Managing Committee resolved to upgrade the D.A.V. High School to a college. The question arose who would be the principal of the college. There were two candidates in the field. Those were Lala Hans Raj and Pandit Guru Datta. Lala Hans Raj had already been working as the honorary headmaster of the D.A.V. School. The latter, Pandit Guru Datta was more qualified than Hans Raj. Lala Lal Chand and Lala Sain Dass were in favour of Lala Hans Raj. So, he was appointed as the Principal of Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore. Pandit Guru Datta was rejected due to two main reasons. Firstly, he had become more erratic in his behaviour. Secondly, his health had also deteriorated. So, this point also created a personal hatred between Hans Raj and Guru Datta and their supporters. When the college started functioning, Pandit Guru Datta and his supporters felt that one of the main duties of the Samaj had to be religious *prachar*. They also wanted this to be part of the function of the college, which should undertake Arya preacher outside the college. But the Managing Committee refused to follow this proposal due to the shortage of college funds which dissatisfied Pandit Guru Datta very much.<sup>37</sup>

Another minor cause of split in Arya Samaj related to the women education. Some contemporary sources of Arya Samaj show that the ideology of the Arya Samaj contained different view points on women education.

In 1880, girls schools were founded at Lahore, Amritsar and Jullundur by the Arya Samaj. Though these schools functioned only for a short period due to the lack of good teachers, text-books and public support,<sup>38</sup> yet the Arya Samaj never neglected women education. In 1885, the Amritsar Arya Samaj began to devote its

35. *The Tribune*, Lahore, November 15, 1893, p. 4.

36. Diwan Chand, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

37. Jordens, J.T.F., *op. cit.*, p. 30.

38. *Arya Patrika*, September 12, 1885, p. 3.

39. *Ibid*, October, 3, 1885, p. 4.

energy and wealth to the construction of girl's school. The cause of the education of women was very much encouraged by this Arya Samaj.<sup>40</sup>

In 1888, Lala Munshi Ram succeeded in opening a school at Jullundur. After two years, in 1890, Jullundur Arya Samaj opened another Kanya Pathshala. Lala Dev Raj, a close associate of Munshi Ram, became the Manager of the school. The school prospered inspite of some opposition, and the number of students rose from its original eleven to fifty five by the end of 1892.<sup>41</sup> While feeling the need of higher education, Lala Dev Raj announced that the Samaj intended to establish a Kanya Mahavidyalaya at a projected cost of Rs. 2,50,000.<sup>42</sup> The debate over this project created difference of opinion. Lala Lajpat Rai and his associates criticised it.

So, all the fore-mentioned causes led to the final split in Arya Samaj in 1893. Both groups of Arya Samaj were known by different names. The group led by Hans Raj was known as Cultured Party, College Party, Moderates and Non-Vegetarians. The other group led by Mahatma Munshi Ram, later on called Swami Shraddhanand, was known as, Gurukul Party, Conservative and Vegetarian Party.

Both types of Samaj-s founded their own educational institutions according to their own views. And now they have illumined the whole of the country with education.<sup>42</sup>

---

40. *Digest of Kanya Mahavidyalaya Reports* for the years 1891-92.

41. *The Tribune*, Lahore, July 6, 1892, p. 4.

42. In spite of this division into two, the Aryas continued to move together on a number of issues, such as the Shudhi Movement. The split was often blurred in face of the pressing political and organizational pressures. See, Kenneth W. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 315-16.



## The Punjab Muslims : A Socio-Economic Study (1901-1920)

Jagtar Singh Rakkar\*

The Muslims, who during the Mughal period formed a privileged class and occupied a leading position in the Punjab society, had been reduced to the level of common subjects under the Sikh rule. Their position was further lowered by the changes gradually brought about by the British rule. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the Muslims began to visualise plans for the formation of a political association to safeguard their interests. The object of this study is to analyse the condition of the Muslims in the Punjab society with a view to discovering how far they were organised as a community. What standing they had in the social, economic, educational fields and in the government service? This thinking reveal why the Muslims organised themselves on communal basis.

The Punjab was the first territory to come under the Muslim rule in India. The Muslims (54.84 per cent) formed majority among the population of the Punjab.<sup>1</sup> The distribution of Muslims throughout the province was uneven, ranging from ninety one per cent in the Attock district to five per cent in the Kangra district, which lie at the northwest and northeast corner of the province respectively. The Muslims were scattered throughout the Punjab. The proportion of Muslims was about eighty per cent in western districts. In the central districts, the strength fell from eighty per cent to thirty per cent as we go towards the east. The Himalayan tract had lowest Muslims percentage ranging from one to ten per cent. Of the native states, Bahawalpur had the highest proportion of Muslims, about eighty-four per cent. Generally speaking the western Punjab was the stronghold of Muslims and their proportion decreased as we moved from west to east.<sup>2</sup> The

---

\* V. & P. O. Rakran Dhaha, Hoshiarpur.

1. In 1911, the total population of the province in the British territory was 199,74,956. The Hindus numbered 67,22,455, the Sikhs 20,93,804 and the Muslims 1,09,55,721. *Census of India, 1911* (Punjab), Part I, pp. 28-29, 161 (Hereafter abbreviated as *Census*).

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 160-61.

preponderance of Islam in the western tract was largely due to the influence of the Muslim invaders who always came from the west.<sup>3</sup>

The Muslims of the Punjab were not an urbanised community. If their percentage among the urban population is compared with their percentage among the general population, it seems that taking the province as a whole, few Muslims lived in the towns, in proportion to their numbers, than the members of other communities. The position, however, varied in the western and eastern parts of the province. In the West Punjab, where, Muslims found three-quarters of the population, they amounted to only just over half of the town-dwellers. In the East Punjab, a rather higher proportion of them lived in the towns than their proportion in the general population.<sup>4</sup> The Hindus took up a large share in the commerce and consequently lived in towns. Their interest in the land was small, particularly in the western districts, where they mostly confined to towns and carried on trade. The Muslims were mainly agricultural by pursuit and consequently their proportion in towns was small. They formed a majority of the rural population.<sup>5</sup>

There were fundamental social and religious differences between the Hindus and the Muslims of the Punjab. The Hindus worshipped idols, the Muslims abhorred them. The Hindus revered the cow, the Muslims ate it. While Hindus objected to kine-killing, because the animal was considered sacred, the Muslims objected to pig-killing, because the Prophet had taught them that the flesh of the pig is unclean. Such differences created a basic antipathy between Hindus and Muslims. It helped to set them apart as self-governing institutions developed in towns, districts and provinces.<sup>6</sup>

The Muslims' attitude and relations with the Hindus and Sikhs were not consistent throughout the province. In the western Punjab, the conversion to Islam was the result largely of missionary efforts of Muslim saints and *faqirs*. The great number of tribes were converted during the thirteenth century in the days of Baba Farid and Bahawal Haqq, to whose eloquence and sanctity Islam in the Punjab owed

---

3. *Ibid.*, 1921, Part I, pp. 173-74.

4. *Ibid.*, 1911, Part II, pp. 23-35.

5. *Census*, 1911, Part I, pp. 14-15, 196; S.S. Thorburn, *Musalman and Money-lenders in the Punjab* (London, 1886), p. 17.

6. *Census*, 1881, Vol. I, pp. 102-03.



more than to the sword of any king.<sup>7</sup> The Muslims of this tract were conservative and orthodox. Time and again there was antipathy between the Muslims and the Hindus who predominated in the towns, particularly towards the Hindu traders and money-lenders in the villages. This clash of interest was, however, more economic than religious.<sup>8</sup> In the central districts of the Punjab, there was little antipathy between the followers of the three religions. Rather a non-sectarian feelings existed in the rural areas.<sup>9</sup> In the eastern Punjab, the conversions to Islam were political and Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully together in the same village. Whether Hindus or Muslims, they were socially and politically one people, ancient tribal customs and ties of blood being stronger than the separatist tendencies.<sup>10</sup> It might be generally said that throughout the Punjab, the religion of the majority mitigated the exclusiveness of the minority. Thus, taking Lahore as a centre, Muslims were progressive in the east and orthodox in the west.<sup>11</sup>

The main occupation of the Punjab Muslims was farming. About 60 per cent of them depended upon pasture and agriculture for their livelihood, 29 per cent upon commerce, 2 per cent upon government service (particularly police force), 2 per cent upon professional and liberal arts, and 7 per cent upon other occupations not mentioned above.<sup>12</sup> At the beginning of period of this study, the influence and power in the Punjab society was divided between three groups : the landlords, the traders and money-lenders and the government servants. So to make a real estimate of Muslim influence in the society, it is necessary to show where the Muslims stood in land, commerce and government service. The Muslims were very backward in the agricultural field of the province. The peasantry, which formed the majority of the Muslim population, was generally in debt. Though indebtedness

7. Baba Farid and Bahawal Haqq were the two great saints of the Southwest Punjab. *Census 1891*, Part I, p. 131; Sir James Douie, *The Panjab, North-West Frontier Province and Kashmir* (Cambridge, 1916), p. 118; E.D. MacLagan, *Gazetteer of the Multan District*, 1901 (Lahore, 1902), Part A, pp. 117-18; *Gazetteer of the Jhang District*, 1908 (Lahore, 1910), Part A, p. 22.

8. O'Dwyer, Michael, *India as I knew it, 1885-1925* (London, 1925), p. 38; Douie, *op. cit.*, p. 119; *Gazetteer of the Rawalpindi District*, 1907 (Lahore, 1909), Part A, p. 81.

9. O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 52; Thorburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

10. O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 52; Douie, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

11. Thorburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

12. Calculated from *Census 1911*, Part II, Table XV, pp. 388-93.

was prevalent among all the agricultural classes throughout the Punjab, yet among the Muslims it was more marked, particularly in the western Punjab. Of the Muslim peasant proprietors of the western Punjab, about 70 per cent were in debt;<sup>13</sup> in some districts like Muzaffargarh, Mianwali and Dera Ghazi Khan, about 90 per cent. were in debt.<sup>14</sup> They were, as a body, heavily indebted to the Hindu and Sikh money-lenders. A large part of cultivated land had also passed to the money-lenders through sales and mortgages.<sup>15</sup> In 1900, the British government passed the Punjab Land Alienation Act, whereby the transfer of land was prohibited from agricultural classes. The British government further passed the Co-operative Credit Societies Act (1904) which led to the establishment of rural credit organisations. Yet, despite these measures, the condition of the Muslim peasantry did not improve much. The Land Alienation Act did not prove to be a significant measure to alleviate poverty and debt in the Punjab. Moreover, the Act created a new money-lending class among the agriculturists.<sup>16</sup>

The Muslims of the Punjab were not a commercialised community. They were backward in the fields of industry, trade and commerce. They were generally engaged in trade in food stuffs, textiles, skins, leather and furs. Certain occupations were entirely held by the Hindus. Money-lending and shopkeeping were generally monopolised by the Hindus. The Hindus formed the majority of the bank managers, money-lenders, exchange and insurance agents, money-changers and brokers and their employees. Out of 1,93,890 persons who depended for their livelihood on trade, establishments of credit, exchange and insurance, only 5,296 were Muslims. Again, the grain and cloth markets in every town were also controlled by the Hindus. Out of 90, 807 persons who depended for their livelihood on trade in grain and pulses, only 16, 625 were Muslims.<sup>17</sup>

13. Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

14. Darling, Malcolm Lyall, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (London, 1925), pp. 116-17.

15. By the years between 1874-75 and 1885-86, eighteen lakh acres of land had been alienated to the money-lenders through sales and mortgages (3,86,000 acres through sales and 14,21,000 acres through mortgages). Punjab Government to Government of India, 7th November, 1883, *Selection from Papers on Indebtedness and Land Transfers* (Calcutta, 1895), pp. 49-50.

16. Darling, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-31 ; Norman Gerald Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900* (Monograph Number Two, Duke University, 1966), pp. 82, 84, 88.

17. *Census 1911*, Part II, Table XV, pp. 388-99.



The Hindus dominated the fields of industry, commerce, trade and banking. Out of 312 factories in the Punjab of which Indians were proprietors, about two hundred were owned by the Hindus.<sup>18</sup> The Hindus paid much more sales tax than the Muslims, and owned more than 75 per cent of commerce and trade. The income-tax afforded a good criterion for the comparative opulence of various communities engaged in pursuits other than agriculture. The district returns for 1910-11 showed that the Hindus paid the largest sums as income-tax.<sup>19</sup> The Hindus also dominated in the legal profession of the province. Out of 2,737 lawyers of all kinds, including *qazis*, law agents and *mukhtars*, the Muslims numbered 1,232. Again, the Hindus took a lion's share among the lawyers' clerks, petition writers, etc.<sup>20</sup>

However, the most powerful group in the Punjab was of the government servants. To this category belonged the officers in the provincial civil service, the subordinate judges, *munsifs*, deputy collectors and tehsildars, who worked directly under the British rulers. It was this class among the Muslims which was more conscious about their share in the state patronage. But the Muslim representation in the government service was very low. In the higher civil services, the percentage of Muslim employees was much less than the Hindus and Sikh employees. Among the civil appointments on the monthly salary of Rs. 100 and over in the Punjab on 1st April, 1913, the Muslim representation was 1 per cent, while the Hindus and Sikhs had their share of 5 per cent.<sup>21</sup> Again of civil appointments on Rs. 200, a month and over in the provincial civil services (both executive and judicial), the Muslims held 71 posts and the Hindus and Sikhs occupied 87 posts.<sup>22</sup> In the lower grades of services, the Muslims were also under-represented. Of the appointments on Rs. 75 and above in 1903, the Muslims held 577 posts, while the Hindus occupied 1202 posts, whereby the Muslim representation to the total employed came to only 21 per cent.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the Muslim representation in the government service was lower than their proportion in population and far less than the Hindu representation. The Muslims were well represented only in the police

18. *Census 1911*, Part I, p. 526.

19. For figures see *ibid.* pp. 527, 553.

20. Out of 3,792 lawyers, clerks and petition-writers, etc., the Muslims were only 1,224. *Ibid.*, p. 524; *Census 1911*, Part II, Table XVIA, pp. 438-42.

21. *Royal Commission on the Public Services in India : Report of the Commissioners* (Calcutta, 1916), Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 498.

22. *Ibid.*; Appendix VIII, p. 518.

23. *Government of India, Home Department, Ests A*, December 1909, Nos. 50-53.

force of the Punjab. The police department was the only department in the civil administration in which the Hindus did not outnumber the Muslims.<sup>24</sup> The Muslims were also well represented in the military service. During the First World War, the number of Muslim combatants in the Indian Army multiplied by more than four and a half.<sup>25</sup>

It may, however, be noted that the Muslim representation in the government service throughout the Punjab was uneven. The Muslims of the East Punjab were better represented in the services than that of the West Punjab. The Muslims of fifteen districts, excluding towns and cantonments, of the West Punjab formed 87 per cent of the population, but held only about 41 per cent of the gazetted appointments under deputy commissioners and district judges.<sup>26</sup> However, the Muslims of the remaining districts of the East Punjab made up 36 per cent of the population and held 37 per cent of these posts. As to ministerial posts in the fifteen districts, the Muslims held 35 per cent of such appointments.<sup>27</sup> Thus, in the western districts the Muslims were inadequately represented in the government service. Further, the representation of the Punjab Muslims in the services was a matter of certain castes among them. The most prominent castes among them which were well represented in the services were Sheikh, Pathan and Sayyed.<sup>28</sup> The better representation of the Hindus in the services was again largely a matter of class, not of religion. The Khattris, Brahmins, Aroras, Banias and Kayasth-s were well represented in the government service.<sup>29</sup>

The main cause of the under-representation of Muslims in the government service was their backwardness in education, particularly in receiving the western education introduced by the British. They

- 
24. Punjab Government to Government of India, 30th July/3rd August, 1909, *ibid.*
  25. For figures see M.S. Leigh (comp.), *The Punjab and the War* (Lahore, 1922), p. 44.
  26. Out of total 1,555 gazetted posts under deputy commissioners and district judges in the fifteen districts of the West Punjab, Muslims held 539 and Hindus 1,016. The proportion thus being one Muslim to two Hindus, whereas if class-differentiation were followed according to population, there should be six Muslims to one Hindu. *GOI. HD, Ests A*, December 1909, Nos. 50-53.
  27. *Ibid.*
  28. Out of 443 gazetted appointments of the Punjab Government in March 1911 which were held by Indians, the Sheikhs held 50 posts, the Pathans 23 posts and the Sayads 22 posts. *Census 1911*, Part I, p. 525.
  29. *Ibid.*



miserably lagged behind other communities in English education.<sup>30</sup> The proportion of literate Muslims was about 23 per cent in the Punjab, while that of the Hindu and Sikh literates was about 72 per cent.<sup>31</sup> The distribution of literates among Muslims was greater in those districts where there were few of them than there were relatively more Muslims.<sup>32</sup> In the cities and towns, the Muslims had very low percentage of literates than the Hindus and Sikhs.<sup>33</sup> Literacy among Muslim females was also very low.<sup>34</sup> The Muslims contributed about 21 per cent of the total population of the Punjab who were literate in English. Again, the percentage of Muslim literate in English was lowest in the western Punjab than the eastern Punjab.<sup>35</sup> They were also very backward in receiving the higher education. Their education at degree level was very low. Out of 2,067 degrees awarded by the Panjab University between the years 1903-1913, the Muslims got 432 degrees, while the Hindus and Sikhs got 1,581 degrees. Thus, the Muslim proportion in receiving higher education came to about 20 per cent.<sup>36</sup>

The Muslims of the Punjab were thus educationally backward. This backwardness was partly incidental to the fact that they were pre-eminently agriculturists and they were in rural tracts, where there were no colleges. Muslim pre-occupation with the classical studies and Islamic culture was also a disability. Muslims studying beyond the primary school level generally preferred instruction in Persian and Arabic rather than western subjects and English.<sup>37</sup> It may also be mentioned that education among Muslims was confined to the priestly tribes of Sayyed and Qureshi, the trading castes of Sheikh and Khoja, and the tribes of high status, e.g., Pathan and Mughal.<sup>38</sup>

---

30. Trevaskis, H.K., *The Punjab of Today* (Lahore, 1932), Vol. II, p. 138.

31. Calculated from *Census, 1911*, Part II, Table VIII, pp. 110-11.

32. *Census, 1921*, Part I, pp. 148-49.

33. In three cities (Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar) and six towns (Multan, Rawalpindi, Ambala, Jullundhur, Sialkot and Ferozepur) the Muslims had average of 139 literates per mile, as compared with 845 Hindus and 520 Sikhs. *Census, 1911*, Part I, pp. 319, 320, 358.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 325, 328-330; *Census, 1921*, Part I, pp. 148-49.

35. *Census, 1911*, Part II, Table VIII, pp. 110-24.

36. *Royal Commission on the Public Services in India*, Vol. I, Appendix X, p. 528.

37. Trevaskis, *The Land of the Five Rivers : an Economic History of the Punjab from the Earliest Times to the Year of Grace 1900* (London, 1928), p. 230; GOI, HD, Es15, 1925, No. 36/11/25.

38. *Census, 1911*, Part I, pp. 321-22, 327.

Thus, we find that though the Punjab Muslims were in majority yet the numerical advantage was offset by their backwardness in literacy and education, particularly in the western education. This educational backwardness hampered the Muslim community in bringing it to the level of other communities, both socially and economically. The Muslims of the West Punjab were more backward than those of the East Punjab. The economic preponderance of other communities over the Muslims, in the meantime, was to lend colour to the Muslim contention that they were in danger of economic exploitation by the Hindus and Sikhs. Their clash of interests with the Hindus and Sikhs was thus both economic and religious. The educated section of the community responded to the new challenges which the community faced. They endeavoured to discover solutions to these problems by opening colleges for community education and founding political associations.



## British Policy Regarding Transit Duty on Charas in the Phulkian States (1905-1937)

Harcharan Singh\*

In 1847, the British Government abolished all transit and town duties throughout their territories on both sides of the Sutlej which came under their sway as a result of the First Anglo-Sikh War.<sup>1</sup> These duties were simultaneously abolished in those of the protected Sikh states which had not rendered any assistance to the British in the war. Thus, the Nabha Darbar had to abolish all transit duties estimated at Rs. 1,22,000 within its territories with the exception of the customs of the Nabha town.<sup>2</sup> The Maharaja of Patiala, in deference to the wishes of the British Government and considering the measure being calculated to promote the interests of his subjects in common with those of the surrounding states, too, did away with transit duties in his State.<sup>3</sup> This deprived the State of excise revenue of Rs. 90,000. Similarly, the Raja of Jind relinquished for himself and his successors all rights to levy excise and transit duties within his territory.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding all this, the British Government continued levying what were really and practically transit duties on articles such as *charas*, *bhang*, English wines, salt, military stores etc., consumed within the states. Consequently the Patiala Darbar had to pay a duty of Rs. 60/- per *seer* on *charas* and Rs. 6/- per *maund* on *bhang* which cost the State a sum of Rs. 1,03,995 and Rs. 436/- respectively.<sup>5</sup>

The Patiala Darbar in 1910 claimed that the duties levied on

---

\*Punjab State Archives, Patiala.

1. Foreign Department, Notification No. 282, 5th February, 1847, *Evidence Placed Before the Butler Committee : Grievances and Inequitable Adjustment of Imperial Burdens*, Vol. IV (London, n.d.), pp. 2024-25, (Henceforth quoted as *Evidence*).
2. Aitchison, C.H., *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. II (Calcutta, 1931), p. 131.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
5. Statement showing the figures of import of *charas* and *bhang* during 1925-27, see, *Evidence*, p. 2026.

*charas*, *bhang*, hill opium and European liquors should be refunded to the State,<sup>6</sup> just as it was done in the case of opium. This plea of the Darbar was rejected and it was observed that cases of these commodities were not parallel to that of opium in which case concession had been made in recognition of the co-operation of the states in suppressing smuggling.<sup>7</sup>

For the declared purpose of assimilating the excise arrangements in the Punjab states with the policy of the government, the Punjab Excise Board was constituted in 1923. All the important native states of the Punjab became its members. On 18th December, 1923, in its inaugural meeting a resolution to the effect was passed that 'taxation should follow consumption'. This should apply to the states as well as the British province.<sup>8</sup> As a corollary to this, the state governments agreed that they would not take more opium than would be necessary for consumption in their states. They also promised that they would cooperate in preventing the export into neighbouring states or to British territory of excisable articles intended for consumption in the states. In the light of this resolution, the Patiala Darbar again raised the question in 1924 that the principle established at the meeting of the Board did not warrant the imposition of duty at a place other than that of its consumption. It was maintained that *charas* being imported from Yarkand was only temporarily housed in godowns at Hoshiarpur, and as such the duty realised on this article by the Punjab Government from State contractors was no other than transit duty. And since the transit duty had already been remitted by the British Government, the duty levied on *charas* and *bhang*, which were consumed within the State, was thus liable to be refunded.<sup>9</sup> The Agent to Governor General, however, suggested that it would be better to raise the question contemplating total exemption from excise duty on articles consumed in the states in the Chamber of Princes where it could be thrashed out in detail.<sup>10</sup>

The real point in refusal seemed to be, as admitted by the Agent

---

6. Foreign Minister, Patiala to Political Agent, *Ibid*, p. 2027.

7. Political Agent, Phulkian States to Foreign Minister, Patiala. 12th April, 1910, *Ibid.*, p. 2027.

8. Extract from the proceedings of the meeting of the Punjab Excise Board held on 18th December, 1923, Foreign Department, Political, 1932, File No. 33, pp.50-55.

9. Foreign Secretary, Patiala to Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States, 17th June, 1924, *Evidence*, p. 2029.

10. Agent to Governor-General, Punjab States to Prime Minister, Patiala, 16th February, 1925, *Ibid.*, p. 2032.



himself, that the government did not want to give effect to such an arrangement, which would create an infinity of claims for rebates necessitating heavy expenditure in dealing with them, for every darbar

India would probably hold out for parity of treatment.<sup>11</sup> Even the idea suggested by the Patiala Darbar<sup>12</sup> of holding a conference between the representatives of the darbars and those of the Punjab Government to discuss this question was not countenanced as it was held that the question was in fact one of imperial and not of provincial concern. It was also observed that the principle of taxing articles imported from outside the limits of British India, whether by land or by sea, had no connection whatever with the internal transit duties which were abolished in 1847. The principle of 'taxation following consumption' was also denied in this case.<sup>13</sup>

Being fully convinced of the fact that the duty on *charas* was no other than a transit duty, the Patiala authorities argued that there was a fundamental distinction between the two topics whereas the land and sea-custom duties were an Imperial subject, the duty levied on excisable articles imported into Patiala State was essentially a matter for the Punjab Government.<sup>14</sup> It was further pointed out that the Kashmir State imported all the *charas* free of duty and states in Bombay Presidency whose excise tariff was not less than that prevalent in the adjacent territories of British India, recovered 13/14th of the excise duty on hemp drugs withdrawn from bonded warehouses in British India for consumption within their territories.<sup>15</sup> In June, 1926 the Jind Darbar too represented that duties levied on articles like *blhang*, *charas* and foreign liquor consumed in the State should be refunded to the Darbar.<sup>16</sup> The Punjab Government, however, rejected the claims of Phulkian States to any rebate on account of *charas* and *blhang* and observed that the rule 'taxation should follow consumption' could not be accepted as a principle which should govern the financial

---

11. *Ibid.*

12. Foreign Secretary, Patiala to Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States, 11th May, 1925, *Ibid.*, p. 2033.

13. Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States to Foreign Minister, Patiala, 17th May, 1925, *Ibid.*, p. 2033.

14. Foreign Secretary, Patiala to Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States, 6th February, 1926, *Ibid.*, pp. 2035-36.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Political Secretary, Jind State to Agent, the Governor-General, Punjab States, 30th June, 1916, *Ibid.*, p. 2015.

relations between the Punjab province and the Princely States.<sup>17</sup>

The Patiala Darbar again represented<sup>18</sup> on the plea that even the Government of India had accepted the principle which should shape the excise policy throughout the whole of India and urged the Punjab Government to refer the matter to the Government of India for decision. The Punjab Government thereupon referred<sup>19</sup> the case to the Supreme Government for decision. In 1926, a Committee appointed by Lord Reading to go into the question, concluded that such claims could neither be based on any assumed right of freedom of transit nor on any treaty or practice.

As the Native Chiefs were pressing hard for redressing their grievances in regard to excise duties levied by the Punjab Government on hemp drugs imported for consumption within their territories, the Government of India again took up this question in June, 1928 but in view of the various objections raised by the Finance Department the matter was postponed until the views of the Butler Committee were known.<sup>20</sup> In the meanwhile the special organisation of the Chamber of Princes described this levy as unjustifiable in principle, for this duty on *charas*, which was not produced in India but was imported from Central Asia and only distributed from Hoshiarpur in the Punjab, was in fact a transit duty. It was pointed out that the Punjab Government granted rebates of duty to the government of the United Provinces on *charas* transmitted there and that the Bombay Government refunded to the states concerned 13/14th of the duty, 1/14th being kept for incidental expenses.<sup>21</sup>

The Butler Committee's views published in February, 1929 were quite unequivocal in favour of the states. The Committee expressed in its report that the arrangements under which Punjab Government levied the full excise duty on *charas* supplied to the concerned states, constituted 'a real grievance' which called for remedy.<sup>22</sup> As a result of the recommendations of the Committee's report, the Government of India felt convinced of the inconsistency of the arrangements under

17. Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States to Patiala and Jind Darbar, 24th August, 1926, *Ibid.*, pp. 2015-2036.

18. Patiala Darbar to Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States November 1926, *Ibid.*, p. 2037.

19. Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States to Patiala and Jind Darbars, 17th January, 1927, *Ibid.*, p. 2038.

20. Foreign Department, Political, 1926, File No. 98-I.

21. *The British Crown and the Indian States* (London, 1929), p. 195.

22. *Report of the Indian States Committee, 1928-29*, para 104, p. 51.



which the Punjab Government levied full excise duty on the supply of *charas* to the neighbouring states. They held that the existing procedure, if allowed to continue, would lead to a sense of grievance, and was in fact hardly consistent with an economic and political federation in which the states might be included.<sup>23</sup> But before taking any step towards the removal of this resentment of the states concerned, the Supreme Government elicited the views of the Local Government.

The Punjab Government which used to realise this duty, could not reconcile to giving up this income from the excise duty. It, therefore, opposed the move to hand over unconditionally to the Punjab states, including the Phulkian States, profits from the taxation on *charas*, unless satisfactory guarantees were secured from these states that they would co-operate to the fullest extent with the Government's policy in excise matters.<sup>24</sup> The Local Government also demanded compensation from the Central Government for the loss in foregoing this source of revenue to which it considered itself legitimately entitled.<sup>25</sup>

Since the Government of India was committed<sup>26</sup> to take steps which would satisfy the states concerned and in view of the impending discussion with the representatives of the states on the Butler Committee Report where they would find it rather difficult to meet criticism in regard to this particular subject,<sup>27</sup> they persuaded the Punjab Government to display generosity by foregoing voluntarily the duty on *charas*.

The Punjab Government, however, showed its inability to depart from the stand already taken by it, explaining that on *charas* alone it would lose Rs. 2,40,168/-. It further expressed the fear that if the concession was made in the case of *charas* there was every probability that it would be extended to all other hemp drugs, which would mean a loss to the Punjab Government of nearly 5 lakhs of rupees per annum.<sup>28</sup>

As the Government of India wanted to include in their despatch on the Butler Report, some definite indication of the manner in which they

23. Despatch, Secretary of State for India, No. Special/Secret, No. 7, 13th September, 1930

24. Foreign Department, Political, 1930, File No. 18.

25. *Ibid.*, 1926-27, File No. 98-I

26. *Ibid.*, 1929, File No. 122-R.

27. *Ibid.*, 1932, File No. 33-I.

28. Punjab Government to Government of India, 18th July, 1930, Foreign Department, Political, 1932, File No. 33-I.

proposed to deal with the *charas* grievances, the Supreme Government after discussing the matter in detail with the Punjab Government and the Agent to Governor-General, Punjab States,<sup>29</sup> decided to abolish with effect from 1st April, 1931 excise duty on *charas* supplied to the neighbouring states of the Punjab including the Phulkian States, subject to certain conditions.<sup>30</sup>

The Supreme Government reserved to themselves the right to withhold *charas* compensation to any state, which might be found pursuing any policy calculated to infringe the rights of the Local Government in revenue matters or to put any obstacle in the way of India's fulfilment of her international obligations in the matter of traffic in dangerous drugs. The maximum duty-free *charas* fixed by the Government of India for each of the Phulkian States of Patiala, Jind and Nabha, amounted to 3400, 500 and 720 *seers* respectively.<sup>31</sup>

Thus came to an end the long-standing dispute between the Phulkian Chiefs and the Punjab Government in regard to the excise duty levied on *charas* imported into their states. This issue unmistakably demonstrates how the Government of India exercised their paramount rights and deprived the states of their legitimate source of income for a long time. Though the excise duty on *charas* was a transit duty which the Native States had been forced to abolish in their respective territories, yet the government continued levying it in British India and selling taxed *charas* to the states. Despite repeated representations from the Phulkian States, the British authorities remained adamant on imposing a great financial loss to the states. It was only after the recommendation of the Indian States Committee and in view of the apprehensive criticism of the British policy in the forthcoming Round Table Conference and the growth of national movement to alarming dimensions, that the British statesmen decided to win over the goodwill of the Native States by giving them compensation for the losses accruing to them due to duties on *charas*.

---

29. Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States to Government of India, 11th May, 1931, *Ibid.*

30. Government of India to Agent, Governor-General, Punjab States, 5th Nov., 1931, *Ibid.*

31. Statement showing the maximum quantify of *charas* free of duty fixed for individual States, *Ibid.* pp. 24-25.



## Character of the Leadership of the Central Sikh League (1919-1928)

Sukhmani Bal\*

There took place an important change in the character of the leadership of the Central Sikh League within a year of its first session held at Amritsar from 27th to 30th December, 1919 which synchronised with the session of the Indian National Congress. Gajjan Singh who was the member of the last Council under the Minto Morley Act of 1909 was chosen to preside over it. He had vehemently argued for the Sikhs getting the number of seats in the Punjab Council which would reflect the political, economic and historical importance of the community and not its numerical strength. Under the Montague Chelmsford Act that was passed by the British Parliament, a special Franchise Committee was still considering the number of seats for the Council to be set up in the provinces and the Central Assembly at Delhi. The Franchise Committee of the Act was still to take its decision on the subject but since then the number of seats in the Punjab Council, to be set up, brought into existence under the new Act had been fixed. Out of the 93 members of the Council, the Sikhs had been given fifteen seats which came to 18% of the Council's membership.<sup>1</sup> That had caused immense frustration among the political-minded Sikhs.

Gajjan Singh's choice as the President was indicative of the composition of the leadership that had organised the Sikh League then. It consisted of those members of the Chief Khalsa Diwan who were for a long time cynical of their organisations' unalloyed loyalty to the government. They included among them many who were suspect in the eyes of the government as early as 1911.<sup>2</sup> There were others who had developed that attitude either during the war or soon after it.

Apart from Gajjan Singh who was elected President of the Amritsar Session, Gyani Gurbux Singh was made the Secretary of the

---

\*Lecturer in History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

1. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II (Princeton, 1966), p. 223.
2. See, Appendix A of D. Parie, 'Memorandum on recent development in Sikh Politics dated 11th August, 1911' published in *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. IV-II, pp. 347-355.

League. Other organisers of the League were Trilochan Singh, Shivdeo Singh Oberoi, Amar Singh, Teja Singh, Jodh Singh, Rai Sahib Baisakha Singh and Sobha Singh. They were a mixed lot but the common factors among them were their independent outlook and high educational attainments according to the standards of those days. Another thing common among them was their awareness of the need for an independent political organisation with greater commitment to the political needs of the community than social reforms. They had among them Sikhs who not only belonged to professions like law, teaching and medicine but also others who had taken to business. They also included contractors who had earned both money and social status by undertaking building contracts at Delhi.

Gajjan Singh was a lawyer of the Ludhiana district.<sup>3</sup> Gyani Gurbux Singh was a barrister from Amritsar.<sup>4</sup> Trilochan Singh was a pleader who had taken to banking at Amritsar<sup>5</sup> and Shivdeo Singh Oberoi was an honorary magistrate of Sialkot who had participated in the Sikh Educational Conference.<sup>6</sup> Amar Singh was an editor of the *Loyall Gazette* and an ex-editor of *Khalsa Advocate*.<sup>7</sup> Teja Singh was for sometime a professor who had later gone to England and then to Canada where he was "mixed up in Sikh Agitation" for a while.<sup>8</sup>

Jodh Singh was also in the teaching profession and very active in the Sikh Educational Movement.<sup>9</sup> Rai Sahib Baisakha Singh and Sobha Singh had gone up the social ladder by taking to building contracts in the construction at New Delhi and stealing time for occasional participation in the activities of the Chief Khalsa Diwan in the Punjab.

These leaders founded the Central Sikh League in April 1919 and dominated the organisation in the first session of the organisation at Amritsar. They belonged to a category characterised as *Tat Khalsa* by the secret agency of the Government of India. They had "at heart the consolidation of the Sikhs purely with a view to enabling them to maintain a separate communal existence." The Government'

3. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 160 fn, p. 219 fn., and pp. 221-222.

4. *The Tribune*, 30th Dec., 1919.

5. Patrie, D, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 356.

7. Home Political Department (Part B), File No. 279-289 XK.W,

8. Patrie, D., *op. cit.*, p. 364.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 350.



intelligence agencies suspected some of them to be members of the "Neo-Sikh Party" which "aims at nothing short of formation of a Sikh nation and the re-establishment of the Sikh rule in Punjab."<sup>10</sup> Some of them looked dangerous to the Government even before the War. Teja Singh was believed to be "thoroughly disloyal."<sup>11</sup> Jodh Singh "irreconcilably hostile to the British government"<sup>12</sup> and Trilochan Singh "a thoroughly disaffected man."<sup>13</sup>

Most members of this leadership were deeply concerned about the position of the upper middle class and the educated elite of the Sikhs to which they themselves belonged, under the new constitution. They were for having an independent political organisation of the Sikhs to guard the interest of this class in the first quarter of 1919 when the Montague Chelmsford Act was yet to be enforced after being given a final shape and continued to show the same concern afterwards. The general upsurge that took place in the Punjab over the Rowlatt Act followed by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the humiliation inflicted by the Martial Law regime further underlined to them the need for such an organisation. Gandhi who had conducted the *satyagraha* on the Rowlatt Act issue had begun to fascinate them. His standing by the Punjabis later on during and after the Martial Law regime had made them look upto the rising star almost as a mentor. They could be described as Gandhi's fans but were not prepared to go whole-hog and join the Congress in the Non-Cooperation Movement that Gandhi had started building up from 1st August, 1919 onwards. That was for two important reasons. In the first place Gandhi had not yet become the undisputed leader of the Indian National Congress. Secondly, they had brought with them the communal attitude imbibed while working in the Chief Khalsa Dewan, and their main concern then as already pointed out was the representation in the Councils to be set up under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Act. They felt that they stood a better chance of achieving their object by setting up an organisation on the pattern of the All India Muslim League and then coming to an understanding with the Congress. They were out for a body which would appear, as the All India Muslim League then appeared, as the exponent of the rights of a particular community and sufficiently nationalist to

---

10. *Ibid.*, p. 364.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 353.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 350.

demand self-government for the country. They wanted an organisation which would be both semi-communal and semi-nationalist.

The speeches and the resolutions passed at the Central Sikh League session held at Amritsar reflected the primary concern of this leadership over what they believed was the inadequate Sikh representation in the Punjab Legislative Council under the new reforms Act which had just received the royal assent. In his Presidential Address, Gajjan Singh said that the Central Sikh League's responsibility was great. The world was under revolution and a new era for India was inaugurated by the announcement of the 20th August and ratified by the joint committee's report. He explained the details of the salient features of the Joint Committee Report before mentioning and underlining the fact that the Sikh representation allotted to the community was most "inadequate". If that would not give the full indication of the class and character of the Central Sikh League's leadership, some of the resolutions passed at the conference would. The resolution on the representation to the Sikhs under the Act put on record "the greatest disappointment and regrets that both in the provincial and Indian Legislatures the Sikh community has been denied adequate and substantial representation to which it is justly entitled by reasons alike of its political status and military achievements and its services and sacrifices for the King Emperor."<sup>14</sup> Another resolution demanded permanent settlement of the land revenue instead of periodic, after every thirty years so far affected in the Punjab. The Central Sikh League was of the opinion that "the periodic settlements are not only a source of constant harassment to the land holders and peasants of the province that entails a heavy pecuniary and other burdens on the small holdings, out of all proportion to their capacity but also result in frequent enhancements of the incident of taxation on the already burdened peasantry and land holders and act as a handicap on agricultural improvements." It suggested that "in the interest of agricultural efficiency and the welfare of the rural population, the government should fix a minimum taxable income and permanent demand from agricultural land as a tax and not as rent."<sup>15</sup> Still another resolution passed in the session was on the canal rates. The League was of the opinion "that the present incidents of canal rates are very heavy and press hard on the agricultural population" and suggested "that government should adopt a more equitable system by reducing the

14 *Ibid.*, Resolution No. 5.

15 *Ibid.*, Resolution No. 8.



cost of irrigation works and establishment; and keeping its own margin of profit as low as possible."<sup>16</sup> In the post war period beginning in 1919, the upper classes of the rural Sikhs had begun asserting themselves and taking to politics.

The leadership of the Central Sikh League did not remain in the hands of the former members of the Chief Khalsa Dewan for long. Events not only moved very fast but also in a direction that completely bewildered them. Attracted by Gandhi in December 1919, they did not take long to realise that his political actions went far beyond their radicalism which did not go beyond strong resolutions and angry deputations.

Gandhi's working up the country on non-cooperation with the government, effected not only the rank and file of the Central Sikh League but also the Sikhs in general. New leaders emerged within the organisation who wanted to see the Central Sikh League represent against the Hunter Committee Report, particularly against the recording of the majority of the Committee. Others had suggested means to fight the thesis propounded by the Report. The Amritsar Sikh League had expressed its warm appreciation of the ability and sense of duty displayed by the Indian members of the Hunter Committee.<sup>17</sup> The Gujranwala Sikh League had suggested a deputation to England.<sup>18</sup> The "Sikh Press" had supported the suggestion with enthusiasm.<sup>19</sup>

The inauguration of the Non-Cooperation Movement on 1st August, 1920 and its adoption by the Congress combined with the rising tempo of the Gurdwara Reform Movement<sup>20</sup> helped new leadership of the Central Sikh League. The Congress fixing *swaraj* as the chief objective of the Non-Cooperation Movement helped it wrest the leadership of the Central Sikh League from the one that had controlled it since December 1919.

The new leadership consisted of Kharak Singh, Sardul Singh

---

16. *Ibid*, Resolution No. 10.

17. *The Tribune*, 22nd July, 1920.

18. *Ibid*.

19. *Ibid*.

20. The Gurdwara Reform Movement began in the middle of June 1920 but caught momentum only in November 1920 when Akalis captured Panja Sahib. Since then it moved at a rapid pace. Its militia, the Akali *Jathas* started capturing gurdwaras. For details see, Sukhmani Bal, 'Politics of the Central Sikh League 1919-1929' (unpublished M. Phil. Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-1982).

Caveeshar, Mangal Singh Gill and three Jhabal brothers together with some others of their way of thinking. What united them was the immediate objective of committing the Sikhs to the Non-Cooperation Movement and thus align the politics of the Sikhs with the mainstream of national politics initiated by Gandhi.

The new leadership differed from the old in two important ways. In the first place most of those who had now set their eyes on capturing the reins of the Central Sikh League did not have the background of long associations with the Chief Khalsa Dewan. They did not, therefore, suffer from any inhibition in resorting to agitational activities. Secondly they were more interested in the new form of politics introduced by Gandhi after ceasing to be a "confirmed co-operator" and "taking to the path of non-cooperation".<sup>21</sup> As compared to the old leadership, they also did not show the same concern for the number of Sikh seats in the Punjab Council and the Legislative Assembly of India. However, there was nothing in their class character to distinguish them from the leaders who controlled the League so far. A good number of them belonged to the upper middle class. Some of them were as well educated as the former leaders and were either members of such prestigious profession as law, medicine and journalism or owners of independent means of livelihood.

Kharak Singh was the pivot around whom the new leadership revolved. He was born in 1868 at Sialkot in a well-to-do family and after graduating from the Punjab University, Lahore, had gone to Allahabad University to do law but his father died and he could not complete it. He had taken a cursory interest in the Sikh Educational Conference held in his town in 1912 when he acted as the Chairman of the Reception Committee but by and large avoided involving himself in the activities of the Chief Khalsa Dewan. He was certainly not a very well known figure in the Dewan. It was the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and its aftermath that kindled the political trait inherent in him. This trait showed itself in his dramatic speech in the inaugural session of the Central Sikh League at Amritsar. He made that speech on his own. In it, he vehemently criticised the policy of British imperialism which had no right to exploit India in the name of peace, law and order. He appealed to the Sikhs to join progressive forces and get ready to free their motherland.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps no delegate got a greater ovation by that emotionally surcharged Conference than the fifty-one years old Kharak

21. Bose, Subhash Chandra, *The Indian Struggle*, p. 39.

22. Santokh Singh, 'Entry into political life', *Baba Kharak Singh Abhinandan Granth*, pp. 183-84.



Singh. He immediately rallied around him the radicals of the Central Sikh League. Among them was Sardul Singh Caveeshar.

Sardul Singh was the moving spirit behind the leadership that was to take over the guidance of the Central Sikh League from October 1920 onwards. Born at Amritsar in 1886, he was still in his mid thirties and had a clear perspective of the issues involved in the politics of the country after the war. After finishing his post-graduation, he had taken to journalism. In 1913, he had started the *Sikh Review*, Delhi and soon made it a spokesman of the Sikhs of advanced political views. He came into the limelight during the Sikh agitation of Gurdwara Rikab Ganj Wall which had subsided during the war. After the war, along with Harchand Singh Lyallpuri and other "extremists", he launched a powerful agitation for the immediate repair of the demolished wall. Together with Harchand Singh, Dan Singh, Jhabal brothers, Amar Singh and Jaswant Singh, he organised many protest meetings and created a stir among the Sikh community. In the autumn of 1919, he gave a call for one hundred martyrs and thus raised a *Shahidi Dal*. So great was the sensation created by him that before the *Shahidi Dal* reached Delhi, the wall was repaired. In early 1919, when Gandhi worked up the country to the Rowlatt Bill Agitation, Caveeshar shifted from Delhi to Lahore and started a new weekly, *New Herald*. He attended the Indian National Congress session held at Amritsar in December 1919 and contributed more than anyone else to bring the Sikh leadership close to the Indian National Congress. He joined the Central Sikh League and with a view to bring the Sikhs into the mainstream of the national politics worked hard to dislodge the old leadership. He succeeded in October 1920 when he got the Presidentship of the League for Kharak Singh and himself became the General Secretary of the organisation.<sup>23</sup> Among those who helped Caveeshar to do that was Harchand Singh.

Harchand Singh was born in 1887 in a Dhillon Jat Sikh family of village Sur Singh in the Amritsar district. His father was a Jagirdar of the British Government. In other words he belonged to a class described by Michael O' Dwyer as "natural leaders of the people." As the only son of his father, he became the sole owner of a large property which became very costly with the growth of Lyallpur township. Harchand Singh erected a big bungalow for his residence just at a stone's throw from the municipal limits of the Lyallpur city. He lived like an aristocrat

23. See, Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 197; S. P. Sen (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. IV, pp. 59-60.

but not of a degenerate type. He was genial, sociable and benevolent and he entertained friends lavishly. He was touched to the quick when in the beginning of 1914, the Government of India demolished the high wall around Rikab Ganj to connect the Government House with the new Secretariat by a straight road. He made a strong protest and started at his own expense an Urdu Weekly to propogate his stand. After the war, he lent his powerful support to Sardul Singh Caveeshar to force the Government to get the demolished wall rebuilt.

Later, he successfully built a group around him who subsequently took a prominent part in the activities of the Central Sikh League. Master Tara Singh, Teja Singh Samundri and Mangal Singh Gill were active participants in this group.<sup>24</sup>

Mangal Singh Gill was born in his ancestral village, Gill in the Ludhiana district in 1896 but had his entire upbringing in the neighbourhood of Lyallpur where his father possessed landed property given to him by the government. He had his schooling at Khalsa High School with Master Tara Singh as the headmaster. He matriculated in 1914 with credit and got a university scholarship for further studies. He joined the Foreman Christian College. While studying there, he came under the Gadharite influence and met Kartar Singh Sarabha who later attained martyrdom. A result of this meeting was that Mangal Singh shifted to Khalsa College, Amritsar wherefrom he graduated in 1919. It was here that he joined the Central Sikh League and became its active member.<sup>25</sup>

The three Jhabal brothers also threw their weight against the old leadership of the Central Sikh League. Sons of Gopal Singh, a landlord of an important village in the Amritsar district, half way between Amritsar and Taran Tarn by road, they commanded considerable influence in the Majha area of the Punjab.<sup>26</sup>

Amar Singh, the eldest of the three brothers, was born in 1892 and had his schooling partly at Jhabal and the rest at Khalsa School Amritsar. He had given up his studies and joined the police department but soon got tired of his British employers who had enacted the Budge Budge tragedy, interfered in the management of the Khalsa college

24. Mangal Singh Gill was more active possibly because his youthful enthusiasm was not restricted by any family responsibilities then.

25. An interview tape-recorded by the Oral History Cell of Punjab Historical Studies Department, Punjabi University, Patiala.

26. Majha is the popular name for the area of Punjab between the rivers Ravi and Beas.



and demolished the wall around Rikab Ganj in 1914. Coming under the influence of Master Mota Singh at the right psychological moment, he gave up his job. Together with his younger brother, he worked hard in 1918 to build up the *Shahidi Jatha* of Sardul Singh Caveeshar and thus contributed to forcing the Government to reconstruct the wall around Rikab Ganj Gurdwara. Thereafter, he started working with Dan Singh Vachhoha whom he followed in becoming the member of the Central Sikh League soon after its formation.

Amar Singh, second brother of Sarmukh Singh, was born in 1895 and had his education at Khalsa College, Amritsar. Keenly interested in social and religious reforms, he became an active member of the Central Majha Diwan, Amritsar. From that to becoming a member of the League, was only a step. Central Majha Dewan was an organisation closely associated with the League. It was as a member of the Central Sikh League that Sarmukh Singh Jhabal joined the Shiromani Akali Dal on its formation on 14th December, 1920. His subsequent work in the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee made him as famous as his elder brother.

The youngest of the Jhabal brothers, Jaswant Singh was born in 1898 and matriculated from the Khalsa High School, Lahore. When the local branch of the League was formed in 1920, he was elected its joint secretary.<sup>27</sup>

Not much is known of the early lives and the family background of two others who were active in the Central Sikh League and helped Kharak Singh and Sardul Singh in taking the organisation out of the control of those who had taken charge of it at the inaugural session. These two were Dan Singh Vachhoha and Master Mota Singh. From a few facts known of the political life of the former, we can surmise that Dan Singh was very close to Kharak Singh and Sardul Singh and must have played no mean role in working up the rank and file of the League in favour of adopting the leadership of the two. The subsequent politics of Mota Singh indicates that he must have played a similar role.<sup>28</sup>

This new leadership started working for getting control of the

27. The information on Jhabal brothers is based on Karam Singh, *Itihasak Khoj : Gurmukh Singh, Akali Darshan*; Jagjit Singh, *Akali Lehr*; S. S. Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*; Giani Hira Singh, *Abhul Yadan*.

28. For the subsequent politics of Dan Singh see, Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian da Itihas*, pp. 26, 91, 117, 120, 156 and 157; for the later politics of Master Mota Singh see, Fauja Singh, *Eminent Free-Jom Fighters of Punjab*, pp. 171-73.

Central Sikh League as early as July 1920. They had taken advantage of Mahatama Gandhi's call to the people to take to non-cooperation as much for the rectification of the Punjab wrongs as for setting the Khilafat issue to spread the message of non cooperation in the Central Punjab. In September, they had organised a series of meetings through the district units of the Central Sikh League that they controlled to make the Sikhs "lash themselves into a national frenzy."<sup>29</sup> They organised such meetings in different villages in the Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore, Sheikhupura and Gujranwala districts and planned "special monster meetings during the Dussehra festival."<sup>30</sup> When the Congress decided to go in for non-cooperation for Swarajya in September 1920, they used it as the concrete issue on which to challenge the group it sought to dislodge from leadership of the Central Sikh League.

The new leadership attained its objective in the second regular session of the League held in Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore on 19th and 20th October, 1920 with only one agenda.<sup>31</sup> The League's new leadership soon tightened its hold on the Central Sikh League. It did that by attaining great success in the next four months in agitational politics. By February 1921, it worked up the Sikhs both on the non-cooperation and Gurdwara Reform front. If it activated the joint non-cooperation committee of the Khilafat, the Punjab Congress and the Central Sikh League itself, it also galvanised the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Shiromani Akali Dal to spirited action.

On 21st February, 1921, occurred the Nankana Sahib Tragedy and that speeded up both the Non-Cooperation and Gurdwara Reform Movement.<sup>32</sup> The Non-Cooperation Movement received a great fillip through the arrests of Central Sikh Leaguers, Mangal Singh Gill,<sup>33</sup> and Sardul Singh Caveeshar.<sup>34</sup> The statement of Caveeshar explaining

29. Chief Secretary, Punjab to the Government of India, 9th October, 1920, File Nos. 203-204, Home Political Deptt. October 1920.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Bal, Sukhmani, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-112.

32. For growth in the Gurdwara Movement see, File No. 451/11, 1922, Home Political Deptt., 1922.

33. *The Tribune* wrote a strong editorial on the arrest of Mangal Singh and gave wide publicity to the court sentencing him to three years rigorous imprisonment for writing an article 'Na Mil Vartan' in the *Akali*; See, *The Tribune*, 10th Dec., 1920 and 18th Jan., 1921.

34. Sardul Singh Caveeshar was arrested on 28th May, 1921. Inder Singh, a Sub-Inspector of Police resigned and advocated non-cooperation. See, *The Tribune*, 28th May, 1921 and 4th June, 1921.



his arrest created a sensation.<sup>35</sup>

On 23rd July, 1921, the men who had joined Kharak Singh to take over the leadership of the Sikh League in October of the previous year gave to the League a new or rather a regular constitution. It has been suggested that the new constitution aimed at helping the "extremists" consolidate their hold over the organisation. That might well be true and the adoption of the new constitution might have led to that result. But there were other reasons for inadequacy of the rules and regulations under which it had conducted itself during the session at Lahore. They were publicly out by an active participation in the conference no sooner it was over.<sup>36</sup> The Central Sikh League's decision to participate in the Non-Cooperation Movement conducted by Gandhi also necessitated a clear announcement of the objects of the League.

It was this leadership which continued to control the League for quite sometime. It successfully continued its alliance with the Indian National Congress till December 1928 when Nehru Report drove it away from the Congress. This leadership did not differ from the earlier leadership in its class character but was certainly more radical in its outlook and quite ready to take to mass politics and the risks involved in it.

---

35. *Ibid.*, 2nd July, 1921.

36. Seva Ram Singh to the General Secretary, Central Sikh League, dated 24th October, 1920, published in *The Tribune*, 29th October, 1920.

## Rural Punjab and the Congress (1920-1942)

S. D. Gajrani\*

The principal objective of writing this paper is to explore and assess the participation, contribution as well as the social base of the Congress Party in the Punjab, in connection with the agrarian problems faced by the peasantry. Its role in the agrarian unrest and also in the movement is cited. Most of the scholars have, even in recent researches, denounced the credibility of the Congress Party in the Punjab and observed that it represented the rich class and failed to win over the sympathy of the masses. Probably such scholars forget its national character and its open and complete support to the demands of ruralities in particular and masses in general, in several parts of the country, such as U.P., Bengal, Bihar etc. Though the various political groups such as the Akalis, the Kirti Kisan group, the Communists, the Socialists, the Ghadarites, the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, etc. in the Punjab opposed the Congress frequently, yet they worked in collaboration with the Congress so far as the freedom struggle was concerned. Many instances are cited in this regard in the course of writing this paper. In brief, an attempt is made to survey the contribution of the Congress in the freedom struggle in the Punjab in general and agrarian unrest and movement in particular, during the period under review, keeping in view its social base in this province.

We all know that the Punjab became an important centre of political and social activity during the Rowlatt Act Agitation and Non-Cooperation Movement. No doubt, the failure of the methods of the Ghadarites and revolutionaries in the rural Punjab prepared the ground for the favourable reception of the Congress and Gandhi's non-violent technique for attaining *swaraj*. Even some earnest members of the Ghadar and other revolutionary parties lost faith in their own methods and were drawn towards Congress Movement.<sup>1</sup>

---

\*Reader, Directorate of Correspondence Courses, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Gandhi, M.K., *Writings and Speeches*, Vol. I (Madras, 1918), p. 328; *Collected Works of Gandhi*, Vol. XVI (New Delhi, 1962), Appendix-III, pp. 533-34; Lajpat Rai, *Autobiographical Writings* (Delhi, 1965), p. 91.



The leaders of various political parties had renewed contacts with the Indian National Congress, the process culminating in the right attempt to link divergent sections in the province-wide politics, in the first decade of the present century. Despite the efforts made by the British to suppress the rural as well as urban agitations under the leadership of the Congress, the Congress in the Punjab proved successful in developing sustained organisation and contacts with other political groups and survived the loss of immediate issues.

Here, it will be appropriate to place the Akali Movement in the broader frame work of the Non-Cooperation Movement in the Punjab. The adoption of non-cooperation resolution by the Sikh League<sup>2</sup> brought a considerable section of the Sikh leadership under the influence of the Indian National Congress. Akali Agitation as well as the *Khilafat* Agitation merged with the Non-Cooperation Movement and helped the Congress to win over a section of the leadership of these respective movements to the Congress Movement and programme as well.<sup>3</sup> The relations of the Indian National Congress with other political organisations are discussed at length in this paper a little later.

Agitation in the Punjab over the Colonisation Bill came to the notice of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. He admired the Punjabees for carrying on their struggle against the bureaucracy heroically.<sup>4</sup> Later, when he was back, Congress under his guidance took keen interest in the problems of this province.<sup>5</sup> Though barred from using the rich religious metaphors that previously had been a part of their political life, yet Congressmen made short tours to the canal colonies to preach a message of national unity and the criticism of the British.<sup>6</sup> The new forces which came into existence, worked in one way or the other under the influence of the Congress programme and ideology.<sup>7</sup> We should

---

2. *The Tribune*, Lahore, Oct., 18, 1921.

3. *Ibid.*, Feb., 18, 1922.

4. *Collected Works of Gandhi*, Vol. VIII, p. 6.

5. For details see *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 142.

6. *The Tribune*, Lahore, see all the issues of the year 1907, especially Editorials and the articles by Lajpat Rai.

7. Speech of the Hon'ble Sir John Maynard, Council Debates, Vol. I, Punjab Legislature, 1921, pp. 89-90 (For details regarding Non-Cooperation Movement in the Punjab, see this complete Vol. I; also see native newspapers of this period; *The Punch*, Lahore, Feb. 16, 1921; *The Zulfikar*, Lahore, Feb. 24, 1921; *The Akhbar-i-Aam*, Lahore, June 4, 1921; *The Tribune*, Lahore, May 7, 1921; *The Bande Matram*, Oct. 29, 1921.

also take a note of the fact that the Congress itself had not abandoned all hopes of agitation in regard to the canal water rates particularly, so far the Congress Sub-Committee had achieved some success in this respect and at the same time the Provincial Congress Sub-Committee tried to explore the possibilities of agitation against the enhanced *abiana* rates. It organised a meeting on 20th July, 1924 at Kana Kacha in the Lahore district, which was attended by 700 agriculturists, including a few Akalis. Resolutions were passed for the adoption of 'all legitimate and peaceful methods' to secure the removal of the tax. A similar meeting was held in the Sheikhupura district, which was largely attended; protests were made and emphasis was laid on the demands; non-payment of land revenue and canal rates.<sup>8</sup>

Before we proceed further, let us have a brief survey of its activities in the year 1921 and even after this year but not beyond 1925. In the first half of 1921, the Congress workers were holding meetings in Lahore, Amritsar and a few other towns. Of course, the attendance of these meetings did not exceed 5000 to 6000 and Gandhi was dissatisfied with the pace of the movement in the Punjab. But it does not mean that the Congress lost its hold there. Gandhi, soon sent Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to inspire the insufficient boycott activities. His speeches in various cities of Punjab, especially in Lahore, Amritsar, Ferozepur and Ludhiana, not only aroused the people of these places but also acted as a catalytic agent to unite the local workers who were occupied with their petty differences and feuds. District level conferences were held in many places and provided a degree of cohesiveness to the movement. By September 1921, the idea of boycott had started catching the imagination of the people. In a meeting which was held in Lahore to stage a bonfire of foreign cloth, public participation touched a high water mark in the congregation of 75,000 people.<sup>9</sup> Gandhi addressed a mammoth meeting of 50,000 people in Lahore emphasising non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and *charkha*. On November 17, according to *The Tribune*, hartal was observed in 112 big and small towns of Punjab. In the beginning of December with the arrest of Lalaji, K. Santhanam and Gopi Chand, the movement took a new turn. Leaders in several cities, towns and even in villages were arrested. It was at this critical juncture that the country folk became aware that those *khaddar* wearing people

8. Home Dept. File Nos. 25/1924 July, 25/1924 August, National Archives of India, New Delhi (Hereafter abbreviated as NAI).

9. *The Tribune*, Lahore, Sept., 16, 1921.



in the cities who used to give a good treat of songs, in fact, were fighting a tough battle against the existing rule of imperialism. Glimpses of this awareness opened the blockade between the cities and the countryside and marked the beginning of the process of the Congress ideas trickling down to the rural folk.

Pt. Nehru delivered an address, in December 1929, three months after which some Amritsar *Zamindars* issued a manifesto taking Nehru to task for his address.<sup>10</sup> They too warned the Punjab landholders that Jawahar Lal wanted to deprive them of their lands because he believed in nationalisation of land, and it was utterly unsuitable to Punjab because its landholders were not big landlords but small peasants. The *Muslim* told its readers that socialism was anti-Islamic and so needed to be fought. It was for the first time that the word socialism became familiar in the political atmosphere of the Punjab.<sup>11</sup> Thus, it was the most significant contribution of the Congress in this province.

On 31st August 1924, the Congress Water Tax Committee held a meeting at Raiwind in the Lahore district. It undertook a scheme for the organisation of the Zamindara Sabha throughout the province chiefly for the purpose of agitating against the increased *abiana*.<sup>12</sup> Another meeting in connection with the Abiana Agitation was held at Tarn Taran on 23rd March, 1925. The Congress Water Tax Committee also made an attempt to extend its activities to the Amritsar and Lyallpur districts.<sup>13</sup> The Hissar and Rohtak districts were other two noticeable centres of the Congress activities.<sup>14</sup> At this time, the *Kirti* advised the Punjabi youth to follow ideas of Nehru rather than that of Bose. Why should they do so? The *Kirti* answered it saying: "There are two types of revolutionaries—those who want to usher in the new era or *Yug Paltaoo* and those who want to overthrow only the existing state or *Raj Paltoo*."<sup>15</sup>

During the month of April a number of meetings were held in Lahore, which were attended by the members of the Congress and provincial *Khilafat* committees, by the *Kirti Kisan* organisation and the three bodies acted in unison so far as anti-government activities

---

10. *The People*, July 5, 1928.

11. *Kirti*, July, 1928.

12. Home Dept., File No. 25/1924-Sept.-Political, NAI.

13. *Ibid.*, File No. 112/1925-Feb. and also of March-Political, NAI.

14. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/VIII/1930-Political, NAI.

15. *Kirti*, July, 1928.

were concerned.<sup>16</sup> Nehru's address when considered in connection with the proceedings of the *Naujawan Bharat Sabha* and the *Kirti Kisan* Conferences leaves little room for any doubt that under his guidance Congress programme will assume very definite socialistic and communistic shape. Its appeal in future was to the masses than to the middle classes, and it is by mass revolutionary movement that the independence was ultimately to be achieved. Apart from the fact that civil-disobedience must result in active disorder, the Congress as a body had approached many stages nearer to the revolutionary and youth movement. The identity of interests and personnel which for some months had characterised their activities in the Punjab is for the rest of India merely a matter of a few months.<sup>17</sup>

In 1930's, the only noticeable centres of the Congress activity were a few where it was at a low level and defensive. Even the hollowness of the Congress activities were noticeable in the districts of Amritsar, Lahore, etc. Similarly, in Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Sheikhupura, Gujrat and Attock, although there was some rural unrest, the revenue realisation was well up to standard<sup>18</sup> and even the Congress meetings were broken up by the boys of Sikh school of the Sialkot district. However, the year 1931 was a landmark in the political life of the province because several political conferences<sup>19</sup> under the auspices of the Congress were held in different *Ilaqas* in the province. The main theme of the speakers, in almost all the conferences, was the peasant and his difficulties and the necessity of being prepared for the coming struggle. Among the resolutions was one condemning the government's alleged repressive policy in the collection of land revenue and another calling on the Government to remit the whole of the land revenue and *abiana*. Appeal was made to the audience not to pay land revenue and *abiana*.<sup>20</sup> Pt. Nehru who visited the province many times, always in his speeches stressed that the programme should not be to help the government but to oppose it, culmina-

16. Home Dept., File No. 1/28-1928-Political, NAI.

17. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/12/1928—Political, NAI.

18. *Ibid.*, File Nos. 112/1925-Political, 18/VIII/1930-Political, 17/1929—Political, NAI.

19. For details of three conferences see, Appendix-III, Home Dept., File Nos. 33/50/1931, 18/11/1931 and 18/12/1931-Political, NAI.

20. *Ibid.* (The main item of Congressmen's demands will be reduction in land revenue by 50% allround), Home Dept., File No. 23/9/31-Political pp. 95-6 (Also, see the Address of S. Satwant Singh, President of the Congress meeting, *Ibid.*, p. 131; also see, File No. 39/9/1933-Political, NAI.



ting in the refusal to pay land revenue, *abiana* and other taxes.<sup>21</sup> However, when Pt. Nehru visited Khalra in Lahore district, Sirhali in Amritsar district, Tarn Taran, Sheikhpura, Jaranwala and Lyallpur, he spoke very simply and confined himself to a few subjects while addressing rural people. All his speeches dealt with the amelioration of the condition of the peasants and workers, the establishment of the socialist state and the attainment of freedom from the British imperialism. The effect of his visits to the countryside was likely to be more dangerous, the peasants were eager to hear solutions of their economic difficulties. His visits proved the existence of the rural class interested in such questions as socialism and independence and they stimulated this interest. It, no doubt, encouraged the numerous socialists and communalists who were attempting to spread their programme in rural areas.<sup>22</sup>

Jawahar Lal's visit to Sirhali undoubtedly increased the risk of opposition to the new settlement, and the notice of this fact be taken that non-payment of land revenue or other taxes were thus, the weapons on which he relied to bring the then government to its knees.<sup>23</sup> He flattered his audience by insisting that the peasantry, if they acted together, could achieve every thing, and he had preached this in the heart of the Majha, a tract of the province, where already revolutionary views and socialist doctrines had a number of fanatical adherents.<sup>24</sup> He always tried to create a revolutionary mentality and atmosphere especially in the countryside.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, there had been a certain amount of agrarian agitation against settlement operation.

Further, to ameliorate the fast deteriorating condition of the Punjab peasantry under the impact of the depression and the consequent fall in prices, peasants' organisations cropped up throughout the central Punjab at the end of twenties. Zamindara Sabha was active and was holding series of meetings to protest against the proposed settlement of the Amritsar district. The movement was backed by the Congress workers and the Kirti Kishan Party. In the month of April, 1930, the Hissar Kisan Sabha headed a campaign against the payment of rents in kind to the landlords. Police was called in to improve the situation before it could assume a serious

---

21. Home Dept., File No. 4/14/1936-Political, NAI.

22. *Ibid.*, File No. 12/3/1936-Political, NAI.

23. *Ibid.*, File No. 4/14/1936-Political, NAI.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, File No. 12/3/1936-Political, NAI.

turn.<sup>26</sup> On this occasion Congress gave special attention to the intensification of rural propaganda in the districts of Hissar, Rohtak, Amritsar, Lahore and Lyallpur. In one of the villages of Lahore district, Jhaman, police and military forces had to be employed in order to restore the authority of the government in the village and its neighbourhood.<sup>27</sup> The same show of force was repeated in Amritsar district. In certain villages of Sheikhpura many arrests were made to suppress the agitation against payment of revenue. In eastern districts which were the home of Hindu Jais, both Congress and Zamindara League-led agitation had spread to a serious extent to all the minor towns and many of the villages.<sup>28</sup> No doubt, Congress and moneylender's methods were attacked while maintaining a moderate criticism of the Congress, the members and sympathisers of the Kirti Kisan Party from among the Ghadarites tried to capture the offices in the Congress Committees and to utilise the Congress organisation to spread its own propaganda.<sup>29</sup>

Particularly from 1930 onwards, the Congress was strong everywhere. This was, therefore, a sufficient obstacle in the work of *Jathebandi* (organisation) of other political groups such as the Kirti Kisan Party, the Communists, etc. because the village people were very much inclined towards the Congress. Two years before any *Jathebandi* could be organised but at this time people wanted that they should work in cooperation with the Congress. It was because of Congress influence that in their speeches in the countryside, *Kirtis* were not only forced to mellow down their attack on the Congress but also to accept that there was no fundamental difference between them and the Congress except divergence of views.<sup>30</sup> The movement gained vigour during the month of February 1932 when 593 persons courted arrest in a single month.<sup>31</sup> In rural meetings non-payment of land revenue was advocated by the Congress workers and in certain villages attempts were made to resist the payment.<sup>32</sup> It is also interesting to note that in most cases the local leader was the common contactman of the Akalis, the Congress party and the Kirti Kisan Party.

---

26. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/11/1930-Political, NAI.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/5/1931-Political, NAI

30. *Ibid.*, File No. 31/111/1931-Political, NAI.

31. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/2/1932-Political, NAI.

32. *Kirti*, July 31, 1936 and August 7, 1936; Hom: Dept., File No. 18/7/1936-Political, NAI.



The campaign to interest the villagers in the South-East Punjab also continued. In the South-West, a number of meetings were held in the districts of Montgomery, Multan, Lyallpur and Muzaffargarh to support the Congress candidate in the Punjab Assembly by-election. Similarly, a small party of Congressmen was touring the Gurdaspur district to enlist members.<sup>33</sup> There had been a revival of Congress activity through out the province especially in the Central and Eastern Punjab. Now the Congressmen made a bitter attack on the Unionists, Imperialists and policy of recruitment in the army.<sup>34</sup>

The Congressmen and the socialists stirred an unrest in the Multan district of the Punjab. Their speeches were anti-government. With the result that the peasants in the area declared their determination not to pay any dues to their landlords.<sup>35</sup> In Majha tract, some meetings were held during the month of June, 1937, in villages at which communists were condemned and attempts were made to attract peasants towards the Congress.<sup>36</sup> Of course, there had been little activity at provincial headquarters but, in districts Congress reorganisation and election propaganda had proceeded apace. More than 70 meetings were held during the month of June, 1937. But Congress leaders did discuss the merits and demerits of the scheme of reshaping but concentrated on their own election propaganda.<sup>37</sup>

In the villages the Congress workers cooperated with the socialists and the communists. The advance made by the Congress in carrying out its message to villages can be illustrated from a police report from Lahore district which showed that out of 33 villages in the jurisdiction of police station Khaira, 20 observed more or less complete hartal on the 1st of April, when anti-constitution day was observed throughout the province.<sup>38</sup> This kind of situation did not prevail every where but Congress propaganda in the villages was making headway also in the districts of Hoshiarpur, Jullundhar and Amritsar. At the Gardhiwala Conference, held in October, 1937, an audience of 50,000 listened Nehru's speech. His visit had created further enthusiasm in the Congress circles. Of course in 1936, inspite of strenuous campaigns,

---

33. Home Dept., File No. 18/7/1937-Political, NAI.

34. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/8/1937-Political, NAI.

35. For further details see, Zetland Collection in microfilms at NAI or Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi (Hereafter abbreviated as NMML).

36. Home Dept., File No. 18/6/1938-Political, NAI.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/4/1937-Political, NAI.

the Congress had failed to complete its quota of recruits i.e. 63 thousands, but in 1937, only the next year when the campaign was more intense, many more than the fixed quota were recruited. In 1937, Congress enlisted 128855 members, 94772 from rural areas and 34083 from the towns while in the previous year only 26511 had been enlisted.<sup>39</sup>

The Congress Socialist Party renewed agitation for the release of political prisoners. It arranged daily meetings in Lahore to support the demand for the political prisoners. Fourth September was fixed as 'Army Recruitment Bill Day' and was observed throughout the province. A meeting of the Congress Socialist Party was held in Lahore which condemned this Bill and reaffirmed the adherence of the Congress to its policy of non-participation in any imperialist war.<sup>40</sup> It is noteworthy to state here that the Congress Socialist Party also was not without internal feuds. Just after a few months of its formation, in February 1938, the Radical League was transformed into Punjab Socialist Party.<sup>41</sup> The two groups, adopted a hostile attitude towards each other but joined hands with the rival group in the Provincial Congress Committee.<sup>42</sup>

It is the most appropriate place to discuss the Congress policy regarding agrarian agitations. The Punjab Legislative Assembly's summer session which ended on July 23, 1938, passed several bills, such as the Registration of Money-lenders Bill, The Alienation of Land (Amendment) Bill, the Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Bill and the Agricultural Produce Market Bill. The Unionists introduced these legislations, because they were convinced that the Congress would oppose these bills and this way they could wean the peasantry away from the Congress.<sup>43</sup> However, the character of the Unionist Party is still to be fixed. Though some scholars like Dr Y. P. Bajaj and Prem Choudhary observe that this party represented the peasantry yet it seems to be doubtful and needs further exploration. The Alienation of Land Act

39. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/11/1937-Political, NAI.

40. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/7/1937-Political, NAI; *The Kirti Lehar*, Meerut, February 27, 1938.

41. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/2/1938-Political. The Karam Singh Mann affairs led to the separation of the radical league from (SP) Vide *The Kirti Lehar*, Meerut, February 13 and 18, 1938.

42. *The Kirti Lehar*, Meerut, April 4, 1938. For details regarding internal dissension in the Congress and even in socialist group see, *Report of the Select Committee of the Punjab legislative Assembly on the money-lending bill* published in *The Tribune*, Lahore, June 28, 1938.

43. Home Dept., File No. 18/10/1939-Political, NAI, File No. PL. 10-1937-38 (Correspondence, recollection of funds from Punjab Legislative Assembly members-letter of Pt. Nehru to Gopi Chand Bhargav), AICC-Papers, NMML.



passed in 1900 did practically nothing to stop the steady impoverishment particularly of the peasantry and other small agriculturists as well. It had instead created a new class of money-lenders from among those sections described as agriculturists in the Act<sup>44</sup> The policy of the Congress party to oppose these bills had been adversely criticised in the press and at many public meetings<sup>45</sup> held at different places from time to time. However, it will not be out of place to say that the Unionists had been following the programme which had been earlier advocated and followed by the Congress in other provinces, such as U.P., Bengal and Bihar. And, if we study, of course, very carefully, the manifestoes of the two parties, we shall find similarities between the two. Above all, the Indian National Congress was the only national party whereas the Unionist Party was a regional one and represented a class of its own. It was more attached to the number of seats it could maintain in the State Assembly than the problems of the poor agriculturists. This goes to the discredit of the Unionists and credibility of the Congress which was to fight for a larger cause.

Of course, at the rural meetings, non-payment of land revenue was advocated by the Congress workers and in certain villages attempts were made to resist the payment when Chhotu Ram's Zamindara Sabha sought to mobilise the peasants on the slogan of reduction in land revenue and *abiana*. The Zamindara Sabha held series of meetings to protest against the proposed settlement of the Districts, and the Congress workers and the Kirti Kisan Party backed the movement.<sup>46</sup> Even once Chhotu Ram remarked, "The Unionists had been following and implementing the programme of the Congress in the province."<sup>47</sup> Let us remember that the Kisan Sabha and the Congress worked in collaboration for the agriculturists. Even the leaders of various political groups, such as Akalis, Socialists, Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Communists, etc. had some direct or indirect contacts with the Congress and they too found their demands in the programme of the Congress.

The Congress gave special attention to the intensification of the rural propaganda in the districts of Lahore, Amritsar, and Lyallpur. In eastern districts, both the Congress and the Zamindara Sabha-led

---

44. For details regarding Congress policy towards Agrarian Legislations see, Sir Sikander Hyat's speech published in *The Tribune*, Lahore, January 17, 1937; *National Front*, 3 July, 1938; Home Dept. File No. 18/7/1938-Political, NAI.

45. Home Dept., File No. 18/7/1938-Political NAI.

46. *Ibid.*, File No. 18/11/1939-Political, NAI.

47. Madan Gopal, *Sir Chhotu Ram : A Political Biography* (1937), p. 69.

agitation had spread to a serious extent to many of the villages.<sup>48</sup> In brief, during the course of peasants movement, the Congress urged the government to take steps towards affording substantial relief to the agriculturists by giving effects to their demand.<sup>49</sup> It is enough to state that the workers as well as the leadership of this party always backed the agrarian movement, and the right cause of the peasantry whenever this movement was launched by any political group in any part of the province.

Before we conclude the part played by the Congress in the Punjab, let us have a look on its role or participation in the East Punjab States. In a note on the development of the Congress activities within the boundaries of the Punjab states, dated 30th December 1938, G. Ahmed of the Punjab CID had this to say, "I must again emphasize the point that though the Congress as a body is not taking interest or a direct part in political or agrarian agitation in the states, prominent congressmen, working under the cloak of one political organisation or another, are trying all they can to stir up unrest among the Punjab States' subjects. The attitude of the AICC towards these states is suffering unmistakably...on the whole, it is clear that as time goes on the Congress will more and more come out into the open and show its hands more clearly."<sup>50</sup>

The All India States Peoples' Conference set up in 1927 had close links with the Indian National Congress and these links were now strengthened, the process culminating in the election of Nehru as the President of the All India States Peoples' Conference held at Ludhiana in 1939.<sup>51</sup> From 1934 onwards when Communists and Socialists began to ally with and function under the wing of the Congress,<sup>52</sup> this union with the foremost party of nationalists not only gave them a new legitimacy, all to their advantage, but also helped in acquiring for the Congress, till then a largely urban based party in the Punjab, a new peasant base. The Riyasti Praja Mandal which was in any case increasingly becoming a mirror image of the Congress, did not remain untou-

48. Home Dept., File No. 18/11/1939-Political, NAI.

49. *The Tribune*, Lahore, June, 23, 1931.

50. Enclosure to the letter from H. D. Craik, Governor of Punjab to Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy dated January 3, 1939, Linlithgow papers Ms. Eur, F125/88, India Office Library (Hereafter abbreviated as IOL).

51. Walia, Ramesh, *Praja Mandal Movement in the East Punjab States* (Patiala, 1972), pp. 11-12.

52. Bhagwan Josh, *Communist Movement in Punjab* (Delhi, 1979), pp. 93, 104-117.



ched by these new ideological influences.<sup>53</sup> It is also true that the *Kirti Leharan* a Communist journal was published only by the Communists of Punjab from Meerut during the period of the U.P. Congress ministry (1937-39) and this further strengthens the argument in favour of the Congress. Besides, the Punjab Kisan Committee with the blessings of the Congress remained especially active during 1938 in enlisting the states subjects as its members and forming branches in the Punjab States' territory...workers of the Committee were busy in the Patiala, Kapurthala and Jind States in distributing membership forms among the peasants.<sup>54</sup> Above all, in the views of the Inspector General Police, Patiala, Praja Mandal, Kisan Organisation and the Congress Committees were all the same. This probably speaks not only about the increasing influence of the Socialists and Communists,<sup>55</sup> but of the congress as well. He reported that the Kisan, Congress and Praja Mandal agitators, a few local but most of them from outside, had for some time past been trying to get at the tenants of *Biswadari* villages and inducing them to refuse to give *batai* on one pretext or the other. Consequently, the trouble which was hitherto confined to a few villages here and there spread to many other villages. It was also reported that the chief and more strong wire-pulling had been emanating from the Congress, Socialist and *Kisan* organisations in the neighbouring territory of Ludhiana district. Let us take note of the fact that any *Jatha* of tenants whenever on its way either to Lahore or Simla, if stopped enroute many villages, was extended full support by the local Congress Committees and welcomed enthusiastically by numerous Congress workers alongwith other *Kisan* leaders.<sup>56</sup> To substantiate it, once in 1938, when a deputation of 100 *Kisans* went to Simla to meet the

53. Note by Prime Minister, Patiala. L/P&S/13/885 (IOL) quoted by Mrs. Mirdulla Mukherjee, 'Peasant Movement in Patiala State : 1937-48' published in *Studies in History*, Vol. I, No. 2, July-Dec. 1979, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 219 ; Bhagwan Josh, *op. cit.*, p. 118. Note by the CID Punjab on the development of Congress activities within the boundaries of Indian States, 30.12.1938; Enclosure to the letter from H.D. Craik, Governor of the Punjab to Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, dated January 3, 1939, Linlithgow's papers in Microfilms, NAI.

55. Confidential Weekly Reports from IGP, Patiala, dated 1.1.1938, 28.2.1938, 8.8.1938, 22.8.1938, 10.10.1938, 27.11.1938, Patiala State Records ; Prime Minister's Office file 1547, Punjab State Archives, Patiala (Hereafter abbreviated as PSA).

56. *The Tribune*, Lahore June 16, 1939; Secret Abstract of Intelligence, Patiala State Records ; Prime Minister's office File 1555, PSA.

British resident, it had a wide ranging impact because it gave the tenant's movement a province-wide publicity at the same time it established vividly and publicly the contacts with the Indian National Congress and *Kisan* leadership.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, many more such *jathas* established contacts with the Congress which extended all possible help to them at the time of need.

Hence, the Congress did reach the ruralities as well as the peasantry and equally influenced the Punjab politics. To this may be added the remark of Pt. Nehru who once observed, "The Congress was the only organisation in India capable of doing this...i.e. extending required help to any movement launched by any political group";<sup>58</sup> it should be, therefore, supported. Even P.C. Joshi, once remarked, "It is the Congress that planted the banner of Indian freedom; it is from its leaders that we got our early lessons in patriotism and it is today Congress that denies us the privilege of fighting shoulder to shoulder with them for the cause they taught us to accept as our aim in life. To us the Congress is our parent organisation, its leaders our political fathers, its followers our brothers in arms."<sup>59</sup>

---

57. Order No. 23 of *Ijlas-i-Khas*, Patiala, dated July 17, 1939, File on 'Correspondence regarding Anti-Biswadar Movement in Patiala, State', Patiala State Records, Prime Minister's office File 2077., PSA.

58. Home Dept., File No. 18/1/1937-Political, NAI.

59. Joshi, P.C., *Congress and Communists* (New Delhi, 1944), p. 6., For details also see, Bhagwan Josh, *op. cit.*



## The Akalis and the Abdication of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha

Gursharan Singh\*

The State of Nabha occupied second position among the princely states of Punjab. It comprised an area of 968 square miles.<sup>1</sup> According to the Census of 1921, its population was 363,394 and its annual revenue was Rs. 240,000.<sup>2</sup> Portions of Nabha territory were interspersed like pieces in a jig-jaw puzzle between tracts of British India and the much larger Patiala State. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh succeeded to the *gaddi* in 1912 at the age of 28 years. He had served on the Viceroy's Legislative Council during 1906-1908 and had successfully piloted the Anand (Sikh Marriage) Bill.<sup>3</sup> In the Council he aligned himself with the non-official members like Gopal Krishana Gokhale and Rash Behari Ghose and was considered a spokesmen of the national viewpoint.

By personal temperament and training, Maharaja Ripudaman Singh had a strong inclination towards Sikhism from his early years. He was deeply religious and in sympathy with the puritanic revival which was agitating the whole community during the early impressionable years of his life. He was not untouched by the advanced social and political movements that were then moulding and shaping the life and thought of India.

In the earlier stages of Sikh awakening in 1907, he fearlessly took the cause of a Sikh *granthi* who had been unjustly dismissed because, while sitting in attendance on the holy *Guru Granth*, he had not *sallaamed* an English officer. He could not salute as according to Sikh principle a *granthi* while in attendance on the holy *Granth Sahib* is not to bow to any person of whatever position or eminence.<sup>4</sup> A few days after this, Maharaja Ripudaman Singh wanted to ask a

---

\*Reader, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Kahan Singh, *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion* (Patiala, 1974), pp. 520-21

2. *Ibid.*

3. Wakefield, Edward, *Past Imperative*, p. 168.

4. A pamphlet, *Truth About Nabha*, p. 41.

question about the injury done to Sikh religious feelings by the distortions of a German missionary, Dr. Trump, employed by the Government to translate the holy *Granth* into English. There could not be a clearer case for asking a question about such a legitimate grievance and requiring redress for it, but the viceroy simply put his foot on it by disallowing the question on the usual plea that it would not be in public interest to reply the question.<sup>5</sup>

In 1907, he took the matter of burning a Sikh Gurdwara in Jhelum district by a set of non-Sikh ruffians, to the Viceregal Council and secured from the Government a promise to make necessary inquiries and punish the guilty persons.<sup>6</sup> He also showed great interest in the agitation for the removal of idols from the precincts of the Golden Temple (1906) which marked a definite mile-stone in the Sikh revival movement. In March 1908, in the two incidents then known as the Rawalpindi Rape Case and the Lahore Shooting Case, which created a great sensation in Indian circle, his strong sympathies were with the nationalists. The first very serious conflict between the Government and the Sikhs occurred in connection with the Gurdwara Rikabganj Wall question in Delhi, wherein he intervened and through Sir Edward Maclogan succeeded in advising the Delhi Government to allow the Sikhs to rebuild the wall.

His succession to the throne of Nabha was marked by serious conflict with the Government. He raised a strong objection against the custom of investing Indian princes on their *gaddi* by an Agent of the British Government. The Maharaja was of the opinion that his succession, which was flawless in law as well as practice, was a matter of birth-right and valid without any British sanction or ceremony.

Ripudaman Singh, as having been brought up in the modern democratic school and a man of stubborn and tenacious will, as he was, took special pleasure in challenging the authority of the British officers whenever he could. When the Lt. Governor of Punjab, Sir Louis Dane, wished to pay a visit to the Maharaja, he immediately replied that it was not possible for him "to receive a visit from His Honour."<sup>7</sup> During the foundation-laying ceremony of the Benaras Hindu University, when all the Indian Princes left the meeting in protest against the speech of Mahatama Gandhi, the lone Indian

---

5. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *The Indian Annual Register*, 1923 (Calcutta), Vol. II, p. 232.



Prince who had the courage to watch the deliberations till its close was Ripudaman Singh. Thus with such a background, it was not surprising to see Ripudaman Singh giving a whole-hearted support to the Gurdwara Reform Movement from its inception in 1920. He even encouraged his own subjects freely to take part in the Sikh movements and also personally helped the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee with money and every indirect support. When, after the Nanakana Sahib tragedy, the Akali Dal gave a call to observe 5th April, 1921, as the 'Nankana Sahib Day' the Maharaja responded to it by foregoing food for the day, donning a black turban and sleeping on the ground. He refused to join the Punjab Government in their Akali hunt of April 1922 when in one week 1700 Akalis were arrested all over the Punjab. This was not all, other serious differences arose between the Punjab Government and the Maharaja. It was said that the officials of the Nabha State were not as helpful as they should have been in tracing and handing over to the Punjab Government a large number of Sikh offenders who had taken refuge in the Nabha State.

Moreover, jealousy between the Maharajas of Nabha and that of Patiala had been brewing for the last ten years. There were efforts at reconciliation but family feuds and pride of position did not allow the chiefs to patch up their differences.<sup>8</sup> A set of mischievous and selfish courtiers succeeded in making both the princes dead enemies of each other. Intrigues and counter-intrigues led to open hostilities. The British Government instead of helping to patch up the differences, instituted an enquiry under Justice Stuart at Ambala. As a result of this enquiry the Government of India deposed the Maharaja on the plea that it was a case of voluntary abdication. His Highness was brought round by threats of danger to write to the Political Agent inviting him to Nabha for an exchange of views, but the latter expressed his inability to go to Nabha and fixing the 5th of June 1923 for an interview at Kasauli. The Agent urged him to abdicate and threatened of worse consequence if he did not. His Highness refused to do so and preferred a reference to the Viceroy. But the Agent refused to entertain this suggestion and instead asked His Highness to let him have a reply by the morning of the 7th June, at the latest. On the 7th June, the Chief Minister of the State was told "that deposition and something like imprisonment were most likely but the Government of India had given a chance to H.H. for this settlement merely with a view to avoid the odium of punishing a ruler. The Maharaja was so hard pressed that

8. Josh, Sohan Singh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas* (Delhi, 1972), pp 258-60.

he had to sign his abdication. He was forced to leave Nabha and the administration arrived there. Col. Minchin said that he had been authorised by the Government of India to take with him to Nabha as many British troops as he liked. Maharaja was also told not to accept any extraneous advice or to avail of any extraneous help from any Sikh organisation. Perhaps the Agent was obsessed with the prospective fear of the S.G.P.C.<sup>9</sup>

Opinions differed from the very beginning regarding the competency of the Shiromani Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. taking up the 'Nabha issue'. Some of the members felt that deposition was a political issue and as such the S.G.P.C. which had been formed simply to look after the affairs of the gurdwaras, was not competent to take up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja. If the community felt that in deposing the Maharaja, the Government had injured the Sikh feelings, the question could then have been taken up by the All India Sikh League, the political organisation of the Sikhs. But this plea did not appeal to the Akalis and they took up the question of the restoration of the Maharaja in their own hands. To begin with it was decided to mobilise public opinion. But the S.G.P.C. and the Akali Dal ultimately plunged into the affair by issuing a statement on 9th July 1923 saying "the hereditary ruler of Nabha was unjustly and forcibly detached from the administration of his state by Government of India." The Government was accused of deliberately taking advantage of Patiala-Nabha dispute to wrest the administration of Nabha State.<sup>10</sup>

The Nabha administration having sensed the possibility of Akali agitation forearmed itself by issuing certain ordinances prohibiting political meetings in Nabha State. The defiance of this order by the Akalis and their holding *diwans* to discuss the prohibited affair resulted in a big agitation. Among the many *diwans* organised to condemn the action of the Government and to pray for the restoration of the Maharaja, the one held at Jaito was on 25th August, 1923. The Government arrested the organisers. This action offered the Akalis a challenge and, therefore, more and more Akalis started pouring into Jaito. The Government retaliated by making more arrests and by declaring the S.G.P.C. and the Akali Dal "unlawful associations." On the night of the 13th September, 1923, all the sixty members of the Interim Committee were arrested from different places and were tried for "treason against the King Emperor."

---

9. Mohinder Singh, *The Akali Movement* (Delhi, 1978), pp. 65-67.

10. *Ibid.*



When these arrests were going on, some of the Akalis assembled at Jaito, began the *Akhand Path*. Police action of September, 14, 1923 in arresting an Akali who was reading the holy *Granth Sahib* greatly agitated the Sikh masses. The news of the desecration spread like a wild fire which ultimately resulted into Jaito Morcha and then to the passage of the Gurdwara Bill.

While the passage of the Gurdwara Act helped settle the questions of disrupted *Akhand Path*, the main question of the restoration of the Maharaja of Nabha to his throne, for which the agitation was started, was by now, almost forgotten. It was this stand of the Akalis that brought them criticism by a section of Sikhs.

There were serious differences of opinion among the S.G.P.C. members inside the Lahore Fort jail about the Nabha affair. It was the Nabha question which caused the first major split among the Akali leaders because with the passage of the Act, most of the Akalis came out of the jails as they felt that they had got in the form of Gurdwara Act, all that they were agitating for.

The long agitation did not help the Maharaja either. On the other hand, the Government stiffened its attitude. Thinking that Dehra Dun was too near to keep him away from the Akali politics, the British authorities removed him to far off Kodai Kanal in the South. After being unable to get back his throne, the Maharaja started condemning the Akalis. In a long note, he challenged the Akali leaders that they had been treacherous and unfaithful to his cause. He further held that the Akalis were responsible for his helplessness to fight the case on his own as all the documents were taken away from him by them.<sup>11</sup>

It is true, the Akalis can be held guilty of having first given hopes for restoration and then disappointed the Maharaja by giving up the question as a matter of expediency. For this the Maharaja himself is also to be blamed. All along he was not steady and firm on his stand. Impressed with the Akali victories against the Government at Guru Ka Bagh and Key Morchas, the Maharaja over-estimated the potentials of his Akali supporters. And during the course of

---

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 70-72.

agitation, the Maharaja shifted his stand and disassociated himself with the Akalis. His undecisive nature and fickle mindedness was mainly responsible for his sufferings. The Maharaja thus in the words of Mahatama Gandhi made it practically impossible for his well wishers to carry on an effective agitation for his restoration.



## Lahore Congress Session 1929 : A Landmark in the History of Freedom Struggle

S. D. Gajrani\*

The 44th Session of the Indian National Congress, held at Lahore in 1929 in the Punjab after a span of ten years since Amritsar session, was a landmark in the history of freedom struggle in India from three view points :

- (a) The emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as a towering personality after years of self-imposed isolation and aloofness.
- (b) The rise of Jawaharlal Nehru as a dynamic leader of the young generation.
- (c) The birth of the new ideals of *Puran Swaraj* out of a deep-rooted controversy between the two groups i.e. of Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose.

Notwithstanding the Provincial Congress Committee's request to Gandhi to succeed Motilal as President for the Lahore session, Gandhi preferred Jawaharlal. He felt that the occasion needed a 'tough and enterprising' Congress President. Jawaharlal had evinced so brilliantly freedom fighter's qualities during the Simon Commission's boycott, braving police lathi charges, that Gandhi felt as if God himself had chosen Jawaharlal to be his chosen instrument for freeing India from the foreign yoke.<sup>1</sup> Gandhi said about Jawaharlal, "He is pure as a crystal, truthful beyond suspicion. Nation is safe in his hands."<sup>2</sup>

By September 1929, when he was decided to be the Congress President for Lahore session, compliments began to pour in from all sides and Sarojini Naidu praised the selection in view of Nehru's dynamism, courage, vision and wisdom.<sup>3</sup>

\*Reader, Directorate of Correspondence Courses, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Gandhi to Nehru, Dec. 2, 1928, *A Bunch of Letters*, p. 71.

2. *The Tribune*, Lahore, Dec. 27, 1929.

3. Sarojini Naidu's letter to Jawaharlal, Sept. 29, 1929, *A Bunch of Letters*, p. 75.

Jawaharlal himself seemed to have been a little surprised for his selection overlooking Subhas Chandra Bose and Vallabhai Patel and observed, "I did not come to it by the main entrance or even a side entrance ; I appeared suddenly by trapdoor and bewildered audience into acceptance."<sup>4</sup> In his early 40s at that time, Jawaharlal was quite a young person to become Congress President, next to G.K. Gokhale and M. A. Azad.

While the stage was set on 26th December, Motilal, the retiring President, handed over the charge to Jawaharlal and in doing so he, like Gandhi, felt that it was only the young who should take the challenging tasks, and further sentimentally quoted a Persian couplet meaning, "What could not be done by father may be achieved by son."<sup>5</sup> So, on 31st December at midnight, when cold wind was blowing, he ascended the rostrum and unfurled the national flag on the banks of the Ravi before a packed audience of 30,000 at Lajpat Rai Nagar. In the course of his presidential address, Jawaharlal said :

India will have to find a solution to its social and economic equality and until she does so, her political and social structure will not have stability. That solution will have no need to follow example of any other country. It must be based on the genius of her people and be an outcome of her thought and culture.<sup>6</sup>

In this session the resolution for *Puran Swaraj* was passed but it was not made clear how best it should be pursued. Mahatama Gandhi presented a draft before the Working Committee at Lahore to launch a civil disobedience movement by boycotting the legislatures.<sup>7</sup> The Subjects Committee too approved Gandhi's draft by a large majority of 117 against 69.<sup>8</sup> But in the afternoon, when the question of the meaning of *Swaraj* arose, much confusion took place. The Mahatama said that *Swaraj* meant complete independence in the sense it was felt by the extremists, but on that score, it should not be confused and pursued with violent means. In this way he felt that he dispelled many doubts entertained by the extremists and youngsters like Subhas Chandra at Madras two years ago.

Srinivasa Iyengar, a dissident like Jawaharlal and Bose at Madras

---

4. *Nehru's Autobiography*, p. 194.

5. *Bombay Chronicle*, Dec. 28, 1929.

6. *The Tribune*, Jan. 7, 1930.

7. Gandhi said in the Lahore Session, "You say that I wanted two years but you all reduced it to one year", *The Tribune*, Dec. 31, 1929.

8. *Ibid.*



too supported Gandhi's motion. He said that there was difference of opinion felt over the resolution but Gandhi now himself was moved it for independence, thus making it a real departure and opening a new era, an era of freedom.<sup>9</sup>

Subhas Chandra Bose, a strong rival to Gandhi in political polemics, opined that mere boycott of the councils would not serve any purpose unless it was followed by setting up a parallel government. Further, he felt, it was inconsistent to boycott the councils on the one hand, and to take oath of office and practice in law courts on the other.<sup>10</sup> To this Gandhi replied, rather philosophically, that sometimes logic and consistency would not go together. He added: "Sometimes mankind gets illogical; it indicates its weakness as also its strength by being frankly and even brutally inconsistent. Inconsistent we are in boycotting legislatures and not boycotting schools and law courts and the post offices and railways and what not."<sup>11</sup> Thus, Gandhi laid emphasis on the boycott of legislatures alone.

Becoming more and more self-confident, Gandhi next went on to say that if a choice was to be made between setting up a parallel government and severing connections with the British or luring millions of people into freedom movement all over the country including seventy lakhs odd villages by peaceful and legitimate means, he would prefer the latter. He added that non-violence and bomb outrage could not go together. He then requested all the members, old and young, not to make an ugly demonstration of the kind made by Subhas Bose but be calm, cool, collected, brave, and courageous,<sup>12</sup> because a parallel government would mean parallel separate courts, schools and colleges, a very difficult preposition to be put into practice. So appealing, he asked the members to think well before voting to the amendment moved by Subhas and in case they were satisfied, he advised them to vote without any change of even a comma.

When Gandhi, thus, urged and voting took place, it was quite astonishing to both the groups that not merely Bose's amendment was defeated but all the fourteen amendments, except one, were rejected with electrifying effect. With this success, Gandhi emerged and shone not only as a first rank leader but a towering personality over all. Though Gandhi had chalked out a programme for civil disobedience,

9. *Ibid*

10. *The Indian National Congress Report, 44th Congress Session 1929*, pp. 120-24.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

12. *The Tribune*, Jan. 3, 1930.

yet he did not clarify what methods he would pursue except saying that the Bardoloi techniques would be repeated if not a repetition of another drama of Chauri-Chaura.<sup>13</sup>

Thus at the Lahore Session two great leaders had emerged, one was Gandhi as a representative of the older generation with conservative and traditional values while the other was Jawaharlal as an instrument to implement those values. It was quite evident that the future of freedom movement in India lay in the hands of these two leaders and that it would be decided and guided with a sort of interaction between the *Guru* and the *Shisya*, i.e. preceptor and disciple. The rise of Gandhi belied the expectations of many of his rivals that after Chauri-Chaura he had lost the indisputable leadership of the Congress.

As a result of the Lahore Session, Gandhi again emerged as the greatest leader of the Congress and the national movement with a new vigour and vitality, never seen before. As in the days of non-cooperation movement, he encountered strong rivals like Subhas Bose, Kelkar, Malaviya, etc. yet he prevailed upon them, indicating that he had not yet lost his magnetism and that he could still be a force to reckon with. It seems that he was not a rigid but flexible personality with insight and integrity. Jawaharlal too, who once was supposed to be an extremist with socialist leanings, ceased to be a Pro-Russian leftist and continued to be a humanist and rationalist. However, the credit of bringing these two leaders to the forefront, in the background of other prominent leaders, went to the Lahore Session.

---

13. It is because of this reason that Irwin once complimented Gandhi that he vowed in a rarefied atmosphere divorced from the practical roots of situation. Irwin to Birkenhead, No. 3, 1923, quoted by Judith Brown, *Congress and Raj*, p. 134.



## Praja Mandal Movement in Punjab

Kiran Passey\*

The Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab states was in a way inspired by Kuka, Singh Sabha and Gurdwara Reform movements. In its early stages, it was purely a peasants' movement which was village-based and Akali-backed.<sup>1</sup> Later on, it assumed the character of a mass movement having the political goal of attaining the democratic and constitutional rights for the people of the states.<sup>2</sup> The organisers of the Praja Mandal Movement had support of All India States People Conference, having close contacts with the Indian National Congress.<sup>3</sup>

Many reforms were introduced in British India in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the administrative, educational, economic and constitutional spheres by the British Government. However, the people of the princely states had been left at the mercy of their despotic chiefs.<sup>4</sup> These states were under the British protection and were secured from external danger and internal revolts. The British protection always helped the native chiefs to crush any movement which arose in their states.

The cause of discontentment among the Malerkotla peasantry was their exploitation alike by the government and the landlords.<sup>5</sup> The peasants here did not have full proprietary rights even in the lands owned by them and they were practically treated as occupancy tenants. They were also burdened with heavy taxes.<sup>6</sup> In the revenue records, the princes or some landlords were shown as *ala malik* or super lord. Another grievance of the Malerkotla peasant proprietors

---

\*Bahera Road, Patiala.

1. Walia, Ramesh, *Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab States* (Patiala, 1972), pp. 44-87.
2. Chief Minister's Office, Malerkotla State, File No. 16 of 1937.
3. Walia, Ramesh, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
4. Chief Minister's Office, Malerkotla State, File No. 16 of 1937.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Talib, Gurbachan Singh, *Sardar Sewa Singh Thikriwala* (Patiala, 1971), p. 26.

was against the *Khawanin* who did not permit them to dispose of their land according to their will.<sup>7</sup> The Nawab was taking undue benefit of the *Nazool* laws by taking possession of lands even when their legal heirs, having legitimate claims, were alive.

On the night of 15th February, 1928 (20 *Magh* 1985 BK), a secret meeting was held at village Sheikha in Patiala State and in this meeting it was resolved to organise the Praja Mandal.<sup>8</sup> S. Sewa Singh Thikriwala was chosen as President of the Praja Mandal. At that time he was in jail. S. Bhagwan Singh was selected as the officiating president and Sardar Ajmer Singh as its secretary.<sup>9</sup> During the next few years, the movement gained momentum.

The Malerkotla State could not remain uninfluenced as the peasants were discontented with the despotic and oppressive rule of the Nawab. At the initiative of Giani Kehar Singh of village Chak, Sewa Singh of Bapla, and Talib Hussain of Sherwanikot, the Praja Mandal was organised in Malerkotla in 1930.<sup>10</sup> Talib Hussain was a prominent figure of the Punjab Ryasti Praja Mandal and edited its official organ—'*Riyasti Duniya*'.

The main demands of the Malerkotla peasants were :

Abolition of *Nazool* laws which were in iniquitous forfeiting the land of a person if he died intestate, in the absence of any male issue.

Abolition of forced labour.

Safeguarding the rights of peasants.

Prohibition of forced excursions over sown lands.

Fixing of the betterment levy on land at the same rates as in British India, where it was lower.

Abolition of certain unjustified levies on land.

Opening of more schools and building of more roads.

Making of equitable tenancy laws.

Granting freedom of association and the press.

Better treatment of political prisoners.

Permission to interview prisoners on plain paper instead of on a duty-paid stamp paper.

Payment of compensation for lands acquired for roads and canals etc.

7. *Khawanin* were the Muslim landlords.

8. Gurcharan Singh, *Jiwani Sardar Sewa Singh Thikriwala* (Patiala, 1970), p. 60.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Walia, Ramesh, *op. cit.*, p. 85.



The demands of the Malerkotla Praja Mandalists were published in the form of a poster, termed 'Malerkotla Indictment' by the State Praja Mandal,<sup>11</sup> and the people were asked to submit their grievances to the Praja Mandal workers. A demand was also made from the paramount power to hold an enquiry into the state administration and to remove the Nawab if the charges against him were proved. The annual observance of the Kothala Day in memory of the persons, who had fallen to police bullets in 1927, became a rallying point for the state peasantry.<sup>12</sup> The responsibility for the observance of the day was not taken over by Punjab Ryasti Praja Mandal, and workers from neighbouring states also participated in the conferences held in the Malerkotla State.<sup>13</sup> The annual fair at Chhappar in Ludbiana district provided another occasion for the Praja Mandal workers to meet and chalk out their programme.<sup>14</sup>

On 12 November 1930, Sewa Singh Thikriwala made an impressive and inspiring speech at Kothala in Malerkotla State,<sup>15</sup> in which he strongly denounced the despotic rule of the Nawab and other Princely Chiefs and vigorously pleaded for the redress of the legitimate grievances of the people and the peasants of the states.<sup>16</sup> In July 1932, he led an agitation in the Malerkotla State and he was imprisoned by the State authorities for three months.<sup>17</sup> After his release, a decree was issued by the three Phulkian States banning all unauthorised political activities in these states. The decree was later known as *Hidayat 88* because it was signed on 5 *poh* 1988 Bikrami. According to this, no society could be formed without a certificate of recognition from the government.<sup>18</sup> The Nawab of Malerkotla had also signed it.

On 4th, 5th and 6th December, 1937 again a conference was held at village Mahmudpur in Malerkotla state.<sup>19</sup> Some Congressmen from British territory also attended it.<sup>20</sup> In this conference ten persons

11. Kebar Singh, Giani, *Dard Kahani*, p. 12.

12. The Kothala incident was a notable incident in Malerkotla in which one hundred Akalis and peasants were killed by the State authorities.

13. Walia, Ramesh, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

14. This fair was held in July-August in Chhappar near Ahmedgarh railway station. Thousands of peasants from the states attended it. Political parties held conferences on the occasion to propogate their programme and policies.

15. Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Talib. Gurbachan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

18. Chiefs Minister's Office, Malerkotla State, File No. 16 of 1937.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

were arrested and necessary arrangements to ban the conference were made by the authorities.<sup>21</sup>

In 1938, Giani Kchar Singh formed Communist Party in Malerkotla which aimed at protecting the rights of the peasants and tenants.<sup>22</sup> In the same year, Malerkotla witnessed a peasants' revolt, which was, however, suppressed by the state authorities.<sup>23</sup>

In August 1938, a Kissan Conference was planned to be held at Chhappar fair. Hardit Singh Bhattal, who was to preside over the Conference, was arrested from his presidential procession and people were dispersed by the police of Malerkotla State. Sangat Singh, who was chosen to preside over the conference after the arrest of Hardit Singh Bhattal, was also taken in custody. Some days later, all the prominent workers of the Praja Mandal Movement in Malerkotla State were arrested and a case of murderous attack under Section 307 of Indian Penal Code was launched against them. Giani Kchar Singh was also arrested under this very section.

On 20th January, 1941 a meeting of the Praja Mandal was arranged at Ahmedgarh in Malerkotla. It was to be addressed by Sahib Singh Sulania who took over the presidentship of the Mandal, but he was arrested while attending the meeting. Most of the other workers were also arrested in 1941. Since most of the leaders of the Praja Mandal were behind the bars and the Second World War had been going on, the following few years were a period of slackness, as far as the agitational activities of the Praja Mandal were concerned.<sup>24</sup>

On 21st April, 1946, a political meeting was organised at Phul Mandi by the Sub-Regional Council of Punjab States People Conference. Many workers of Malerkotla State also took part in it.<sup>25</sup>

In January 1947, when the Praja Mandalists launched *satyagrah* in the Nabha State over a minor incident on the birthday of Subhash Chandra Bose, the Malerkotla workers of Praja Mandal also participated in it.

---

21. *Ibid.* The important among these ten persons were : Ishar Singh, Kura Singh, Sundar Singh, Ralla Singh, Jawala Singh, Harnam Singh and Arjan Singh Alipur.

22. Pamphlet by Giani Kchar Singh, 'Har ik Punjabi Riyast vich Conference'.

23. Walia, Ramesh, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *The Tribune*, 14th March, 1939.



The formation of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union which included Malerkotla State in 1948 finally ended the personal rule in all these states and with this the most important demand of Praja Mandal Movement was fulfilled. After the formation of Union, the name of the Praja Mandal Movement was changed into Pepsu Pradesh Congress.<sup>26</sup>

---

26. Menon, V.P., *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, p. 237.

## Genesis of Praja Mandal Movement in Patiala State

J. S. Rekhi\*

It is generally believed that during the close of the second decade of the twentieth century, the Indian freedom struggle began to undergo transformation from the bourgeoisie to mass movement under the leadership of Mahatama Gandhi in British India. The boundaries of the British Indian states being conterminous and interaction between their inhabitants being active, these factors naturally aroused the interest of the people of Indian states in the freedom struggle and democratisation of political institutions.

Being ruled by the autocratic Indian princes in collaboration with the landed aristocracy, the people in the states gradually became conscious of economic exploitation and deprivation of political rights and democratic institutions. It was a popular saying that they were 'slaves of the slaves.'

The problem of the people of the Indian states was very complex, as ostensibly, they were not under the British rule nor had yet they evolved into a modern class structure. In the semi-feudal system of society with practically no educated class and absolute absence of even traditional democratic institutions, accompanied by economic and social backwardness, it appears strange that in the twenties, a powerful movement, such as Praja Mandal Movement, began to develop in the Patiala State.

It may be pointed out that the Gurdwara Reform Movement served as the catalyst, which helped the Movement to grow in the State. It cleared the vision of the people of the State as they began to view the position of the Maharaja synonym of the Mahants in the Gurdwara Reform Movement. The Mahant-Maharaja syndrome created a perspective that both of them were backed by the British might and both

---

\*Lecturer in History, Directorate of Correspondence Courses, Punjabi University, Patiala.



of them were exploiting the masses and were living in luxury. The Gurdwara Reform Movement brought into existence a leadership of the peasantry in the Patiala State which politicalized the economic problem of the masses and brought into the fold of Praja Mandal Movement, peasantry in large numbers which served a base of granite.

Of all the Punjab native states, except Jammu and Kashmir, Patiala was the largest with an annual income of about one and a half crore of rupees and an area of 441 sq. miles, but the condition of its subjects was deplorable.<sup>1</sup> Being run on the traditional political system of autocracy, under the British protection, the Maharaja adopted the attitude of irresponsibility towards State's affairs. In regard to the nature of his State, it was ruled by one man<sup>2</sup> with no codified laws, no independent judiciary and no right to appeal. His word was law and decisions were final and absolute. Feelings to this effect were expressed rather strongly by Sardar Sewa Singh Thikriwala, the founder of the Praja Mandal in Patiala in his address delivered at Ludhiana, in the second Conference of Punjab Rayasti Praja Mandal, held in 1930 :—

I (Sewa Singh Thikriwala) fear, there is no space enough for me to describe in detail the maladministration of the states and all the extravagant luxuries and selfish pursuits of the rulers of almost all the native states of our province, but, I cannot refrain at this occasion from mentioning in brief about Patiala...there has been so much spiritual, moral and economic depravity and downfall that it appears as if *satan* is the head of the affairs of the State.<sup>3</sup>

He further said :

The people of Patiala were sick of the tyrannies of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh since long, but there seems to be no end to them. Those tyrannies which included murders, rapes and other heinous offences went on increasing day by day.<sup>4</sup>

From the above statements of Sewa Singh Thikriwala, it is clear that the conduct, attitude, policy and functions of the Maharaja led the

---

1. *Patiala State Administrative Report* for the year 1929-30, Punjab State Archives, Patiala.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Punjab Rayasti Praja Mandal* held at Ludhiana on 11, 12, 13 Oct., 1930, File No. 60, Punjab State Archives, Patiala

4. *Ibid.*

attention of the people and public opinion to grow against the Maharaja. The peasantry of Patiala was undergoing terrible suffering, ruthless repression at the hands of the State and the feudal landed aristocracy.<sup>5</sup> In seven hundred villages of the State, a pernicious agrarian system gradually developed. The land was under the cultivation of occupancy tenants known as *muzara maurusi*. According to the laws then prevailing in this State the land belonged to the absentee land-lord, but the right of cultivation belonged to the occupancy tenants and the latter had to pay a share of the crop known as *batai* at every harvest to the former. The occupancy tenant could be ejected out of the holdings if the tenant defaulted in paying his dues. The share of the land-lord was ascertained by assessing the crop when it was yet standing. The revenue to the State was paid by the land-lord. The occupancy tenant, who had been attached to the land for many generations, was resentful of his position as such. He felt that he was the land-lord and the real proprietor but he had been deprived of his proprietary rights by the cunning land-lord at the time of land settlement of 1903 A.D. with the assistance of revenue officials. In 1905 and before, the land revenue was paid to the State in kind and this system was known as *kacha-batai*. Later on the State share was collected in cash. The revenue collectors even then continued realising *kacha batai* from the cultivators and during settlement got them recorded as mere occupancy tenants. Further deterioration of their position can amply be illustrated in a representation made by the president and the members of the *muzara* association. It stated : "In 1901-1903, through *gununi* land settlement, the *Biswadari* system was further strengthened. The *Muzaras* were further differentiated into occupancy tenants and tenants-at-will. Generally the tenants of higher officials were recorded tenants-at-will who could be ejected at any time at the sweet-will of the *Biswadar*. Moreover, in the same village some land was recorded as *Maurusi* and some *Non-Maurusi*."<sup>6</sup> These so-called occupancy tenants had enough documentary evidence in their possession in support of their claim as proprietors. They clamoured for achieving their right but their voice was crushed with untold cruelties by the State police.

The State being feudalistic and a landlord having a dominant

---

5. \*Patiala State was one of those regions of India where the peasantry had been suffering hardships at the hands of the state and the feudal landlords, Patiala State Tenants File No. 6, p. 151, P.S.A.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 105.



voice in the State, the latter manocuvred to swallow the bigger share than was his due by under hand means. Besides, the occupancy tenants were made to cultivate the personal land of the feudal lord without any remuneration for his labour and also had to perform so many other duties towards him.<sup>7</sup> The occupancy tenant who deemed himself, as the proprietor, justifiably protested against all these inequalities. Internally, the situation was already favourable as the peasantry had a lot of grievances. The twenties, therefore, were the suitable years for the Praja Mandal Movement to take its birth.<sup>8</sup>

In the early 1920s, the Punjab Government, finding the Akali Movement drifting into politics, particularly when the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal began agitating for the restoration of the deposed Maharaja of Nabha to his throne, declared these bodies as unlawful.<sup>9</sup> Further more, on 7th January, 1924, they arrested several of their leaders. The Sikh rulers of the Phulkian States, who were out to please their British masters, followed suit.

These repressions and oppressions perpetrated on the Akalis by the Patiala State are revealed in a letter of Sir Liaquat Hayat Khan addressed to the Maharaja.

...Local Akali leaders prompted by the emissaries of the S.G.P.C. hastily organised a succession of political diwans in various affected centres with the avowed object of overawing the Patiala Government, and infusing courage and enthusiasm among their rank and file. But we (State Government) were not unprepared for these developments and the executive staff very vigorously and most successfully grappled with the situation which was menacing enough to test their energy to the utmost. Apart from local political troubles, the march to Jaito of Akali Jathas, often through Patiala territory, necessitated constant vigilance being maintained over state subjects with a view to discourage the wave of enthusiasm which permeated the Sikhs peasantry at the time.<sup>10</sup>

In view of this situation, it was considered necessary to augment the existing law by a special *Shahi Farman* which forbade all seditious activities in any form or manner whatsoever against the Patiala State or the British Government; severe penalties including forfeiture of

7. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

8. Walia, Ramesh, *Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab State* (Patiala, 1972) p. 45.

9. Teja Singh, *The Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening* (Jullundur, 1929), p. 370.

10. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement*, pp. XVI-XVII.

property were provided for violating this *farman*. Armed with extra weapons which proved so efficacious against local seditionists, the C.I.D., on whom fell the brunt of the work in connection with the political agitation, made several important arrests and before long, over a score of the offenders were duly accounted for and lodged in a subsidiary jail especially set up for them at Bhatinda.<sup>11</sup>

In order to carry on the struggle, successfully they sought the cooperation of Indian National Congress also. But the latter refused to be drawn directly into the people's movement. Some historians suggest that it was a tactical move of the Congress, for it did not wish to offend the princes and strengthen the British.<sup>12</sup> The refusal of the Indian National Congress forced the leaders of the State to negotiate with All India States People's Conference. Unwarranted arrests of large number of leaders, including Sewa Singh Thikriwala of Patiala State, agitated the minds of the people. Anxious as the leaders were, they approached Seth Amrit Lal, General Secretary, All India States People's Conference, who advised them to form organisation to redress their grievances. So, the deputation which waited upon Shri Amrit Lal Seth, accepted his advice and decided to form Praja Mandal in the Patiala State. They even consulted the Akali leaders for the purpose. A poster was published in the name of Jaswant Singh, an Akali leader, in which date and place regarding the election of the office bearers of Praja Mandal unit was announced.

Accordingly, the election of the office bearers of the Patiala State Praja Mandal was held at village Saikha in Barnala Tehsil at 12 p.m. in February 1928.<sup>13</sup> It was conducted under the Presidentship of Bakhshish Singh Kattu. As a result of this election the following office-bearers were elected :

- (i) Sardar Sewa Singh Thikriwala, President
- (ii) Bhagwan Singh Longowalia, Acting President
- (iii) Ajmer Singh, General Secretary

As the time passed, the Praja Mandals were formed in other States, viz., Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala, Faridkot, Kalsia, Nalagarh, Pataudi, Loharu, Simla Hill State etc. Now, it was felt absolutely necessary by the founders of the local Praja Mandals to establish a central body of this organisation for the common cause and programme. Thus was formed the Punjab Riyasti Praja Mandal on 7th July, 1928 at village Mansa.<sup>14</sup>

11. *Ibid.*

12. Handa, R.L., *History of Freedom Struggle in Princely States* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 129.

13. Bhaura, Ujagar Singh, *Amar Shaheed Sewa Singh Thikriwala* (Ludhiana), p. 41.

14. I.G. Police, File No. 224, pp. 117-18, dated August 15, 1978, P.S.A.



## Giani Zail Singh's Role in the Praja Mandal Movement in Faridkot State

Kulbir Singh Dhillon\*

Giani Zail Singh was born on 5th May, 1916 in the village Sandhwan of the erstwhile Faridkot State. In his young age he was greatly influenced by the activities of the Punjab Riyasti Praja Mandal as well as those of the nationalists of the British Punjab against the imperialist government. The martyrdom of Bhagat Singh particularly exercised profound influence upon him, and he decided to plunge into the freedom struggle. To begin with, he came into close contact with the prominent Akali leaders of the Faridkot State. In September 1937, an Akali conference was organised at Kotkapura by Giani Zail Singh, Gurbux Singh, Janga Singh etc. in the garb of a religious *dewan*. In this conference, the main demands raised pertained to the grievances of the peasantry. The Raja of Faridkot State decided to stop this political propaganda in the shape of religious *dewans*. He informed Giani Zail Singh, General Secretary, Akali Jatha Faridkot that political speeches were not at all allowed to be delivered in the religious *dewans*<sup>1</sup> and that he would be responsible for any speech of political nature which might excite disaffection towards the Darbar<sup>2</sup>

In April 1938, a Congress Committee of Faridkot State was formed with Giani Zail Singh as its Secretary and Janga Singh of Burj Harika, its President. The name of the Congress Committee was changed on 21st May, 1939 to that of Praja Mandal Riyast Faridkot.<sup>3</sup> In the beginning, the movement was mostly an affair of local peasants. At that time, the emphasis was on their professional demands, namely, the auctioning of *shamlat* or village common-lands should be stopped;

---

\*Research student, History Department, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Records of Faridkot State, File No. 336, Punjab State Archives, Patiala (Hereafter abbreviated as PSA).

2. *Ibid*.

3. *Roznamacha Karguzari* by Sardar Kehar Singh, Police Inspector, Faridkot State, PSA.

peasants should be allowed to sell their crops in any market town without any compulsion<sup>4</sup> and full proprietary rights be given to *kisans* through abolition of 'ala malik' system.<sup>5</sup> Later on they also put forth their most progressive demands ever made by any other Praja Mandal in the states of Punjab, such as restoration of civil liberties, full freedom of speech and association, liquidation of corruption in the administration, end of share-cropping, elected assembly, fixing of working hours and good salaries for labourers, establishment of municipal committees in towns and rapid industrialisation etc.<sup>6</sup>

For the propagation of these demands, two meetings were organised at Kotkapura Mandi under the chairmanship of Giani Zail Singh. The first meeting was held on 21st June, 1939. The police and some of the loyalists tried to disturb the meeting. When the meeting was just to start, Inspector Kehar Singh, along with some constables suddenly appeared at the meeting place and threw brickbats resulting in the severe injury to many workers.<sup>7</sup> The meeting was adjourned by Giani Zail Singh as a protest against the high-handed action of the state police. The second meeting was held on 24th June of the same year. The State authority again made efforts to disturb the meeting. Heavy brick-batting was done by loyalists and squads of drum beaters were employed by the administrative authority to disturb the meeting.<sup>8</sup>

The State authority undertook all possible measures to crush the Praja Mandal Movement. Kehar Singh, Police-Inspector, and Sant Singh, Magistrate, were specially appointed for this purpose. False cases were registered against the activists of the Praja Mandal. The prominent organizers of the movement, such as Giani Zail Singh, Janga Singh and Sandhura Singh of Manisinghwala were arrested without any written warrant being issued against them and were awarded four to five years rigorous imprisonment.<sup>9</sup> Even ordinary

- 
4. Janga Singh's Urdu Pamphlet 'Dukhi Janta Ki Dili Ubal' 1939, PSA.
  5. The State had refused to regard peasants as proprietors of the lands. Ala malik was Raja himself. According to this system, the name of the Raja was entered in the revenue records as super owner of all agricultural lands in the State. See, *The Tribune*, Lahore, 23rd May, 1946.
  6. Janga Singh's Urdu pamphlet, *op. cit.*; also see, R. C. Rabra and Fauja Singh, *The City of Faridkot : Past and Present* (Patiala, 1978), pp. 39-40.
  7. Avtar Singh, *Din Dihare Kaliaan Raatan*, pp. 32-35; Records of Faridkot State, File No. 357, PSA.
  8. *Ibid.*
  9. *Faridkot State Gazette*, 22nd June and 27th July, 1939, PSA.



meetings were prohibited in the State. A warning was given against any outside interference in the internal affairs of the State.<sup>10</sup> Political propaganda in the shape of religious *dewans* was also prohibited.

The arrest of Giani Zail Singh and other leaders of the Praja Mandal created reaction among the Praja Mandalists. A complete strike was observed in Kotkapura against their arrests. Messages were sent to Dr. Kitchlew, President of the State Congress Committee Punjab, and Master Tara Singh, President Shiromani Akali Dal, Amritsar. Both the organisations condemned the atrocities of the Raja of Faridkot and expressed their full sympathy with the Praja Mandal of Faridkot State.<sup>11</sup>

In the jail, Giani Zail Singh was treated as an ordinary criminal and was kept in solitary confinement. He was not allowed to meet his relatives. He was compelled to do hard labour, such as grinding 17 *seers* of wheat on the *chakki* every day, weaving of *khaddi*, turning of *kohlu* with other criminals and producing three *ghanees* of oil daily, continuous beating of *munj*, digging of 20 feet deep well, putting on *danda-beri* for 24 hours,<sup>12</sup> etc. One of the colleagues of Giani Zail Singh, Tara Singh Maur, died due to severe torture because he refused to give any false statement against Giani Zail Singh. When only three months of term of imprisonment were left, Giani Zail Singh's mother fell ill. She longed to see her son before breathing her last, but Raja Harinder Singh refused to release Giani Zail Singh even on parol.<sup>13</sup> and she died without fulfilling her last desire.

Giani Zail Singh was released from jail after four years and ten months. On his release in 1943, he went to Amritsar on the advice of Udham Singh Nagoke. When Giani Zail Singh returned to his State in 1946, the Praja Mandal Movement of Faridkot State was in its full swing. A crisis developed in the State when some of the school children tried to hoist the Congress tri-colour flag in the Faridkot grain market but they were forcibly removed by the State police.<sup>14</sup> Some of the boys were wounded by the police assault. This incident stirred the people of the State and they rose against the State authority. They tried to hoist the national flag at the same spot but

10. *Roznamcha Karguzari, op. cit.*

11. Gurnek Singh and Fauja Singh, *Praja Mandal Andolan Riyast Faridkot* (Patiala 1976), pp. 36-37.

12. *Roznamcha Karguzari, op. cit.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. *The Tribune*, 10th April, 1946.

they were forcibly removed by the police. When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was informed about this incident and the high-handedness of the Faridkot Raja by Giani Zail Singh and other leaders of Praja Mandal, the former expressed his full sympathy with the people of the State and decided to visit Faridkot. He reached there on 27th May, 1946 and hoisted the tri-colour flag at the grain market where the school children had been beaten by the State police.<sup>15</sup> The gravity of the situation was realised by Raja Harinder Singh and he chose to negotiate with Pandit Nehru. This resulted in the conclusion of Nehru-Harinder Pact.<sup>16</sup>

Giani Zail Singh, being President of Praja Mandal of Faridkot State, insisted again and again on the implementation of the Nehru-Harinder agreement. But the Raja remained practically indifferent till the partition of the country in August 1947 provided him a good excuse to delay the implementation of the agreement. On 18th October, 1947, a meeting of the State Praja Mandal was held under the chairmanship of Giani Zail Singh in which it was decided that the Raja be requested to enforce terms of the agreement immediately. As he paid no heed to the request, an ultimatum was served on the Raja by Giani Zail Singh on 21st December, 1947 to set up responsible government failing which a *satyagrah* would be launched.<sup>17</sup> On the morning of 1st March, 1948, Giani Zail Singh with hundreds of *satyagrahis* besieged the Faridkot Secretariate and established a parallel government in the State. He assumed the authority of the Governor and appointed Prime Minister and other ministers of the State. Sardar Gurbux Singh Chahal was appointed as Prime Minister, Lala Amar Nath as Judicial Minister, S. Mehar Singh as Home Minister, Pandit Chetan Dev as Revenue Minister, and Janga Singh as Defence Minister.<sup>18</sup>

The leaders of the Praja Mandal Movement, Giani Zail Singh, Pandit Chetan Dev, Lala Amar Nath and Janga Singh, who besieged

---

15. *The Tribune*, 28th May, 1946.

16. Records of Faridkot State, File No. 456, PSA. According to this pact, all restrictions on the hoisting of the Congress flag and forming of associations were to be withdrawn; all the detained persons were to be released and investigation was to be conducted by Chief Justice of the State about the high handedness of the Police Officials etc.

17. *The Tribune*, 31st Dec., 1946.

18. *The Statesman*, Delhi, 1st April, 1948.



the Secretariat, were arrested and sent to Faridkot jail.<sup>19</sup> The volunteers of the Praja Mandal were mercilessly beaten by the State Police which resulted in severe injuries to a large number of them.<sup>20</sup> Inhuman atrocities were also perpetrated on those workers who were arrested.<sup>21</sup> Here the famous 'Jeep Episode' occurred. The hands of Giani Zail Singh were tied behind the Jeep and he was threatened to be dragged along the streets unless he was relented.<sup>22</sup> But the possible reaction of this inhuman punishment ultimately prevented Raja Harinder Singh from carrying out the threat.

As a result of the intervention of Sardar Patel, all the 250 workers of Praja Mandal, including Giani Zail Singh and his ministers of the parallel government were released on 20th March, 1948.<sup>23</sup> After his release, Giani Zail Singh along with his ministers proceeded to Delhi and met Dr. Pattabhai Sitaramaya, Acting President of All India States People's Conference to whom he narrated the woeful story of the atrocities committed by Raja Harinder Singh and his officials on the people of the Faridkot State.<sup>24</sup>

The struggle which was started in 1938 by Giani Zail Singh in the form of Praja Mandal Movement, finally ended in 1948 when the State was merged into the PEPSU. To Giani Zail Singh goes the credit of mobilising masses in the freedom struggle in a Princely State where political consciousness was virtually absent,

---

19. Giani Zail Singh was fined Rs. 50/- and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. See, Records of Faridkot State Roshwara No. 132, Misal No. 4, Samvat 2004, PSA.

20. Bedi, B. P. L., *Monstrous Rule in Faridkot* (New Delhi, 1948), p. 7.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

22. Ahluwalia, B. K. and Ahluwalia, Shashi, *Our President Giani Zail Singh* (New Delhi 1983), p. 17.

23. *Navan Zamana* (Weekly, Moga), 30th March, 1948.

24. Bedi, B. P. L., *op. cit.*, p. 16.

## **Sikandar Jinnah Pact : A Brief Study in Punjab Politics and Freedom Struggle (1937-1944)**

**Y.P. Bajaj\***

It is a pity that at Lucknow where in 1916 the Muslim League had taken a progressive step in joining the Indian National Congress to remove the fetters of slavery of the motherland, in that very place two decades afterwards it met again to take the most retrograde step in joining the reactionary forces to oppose the Congress. The much criticised Sikandar-Jinnah Pact was concluded on 15 October 1937 at the Lucknow session of the Muslim League. The more significant parts of its provisions were :<sup>1</sup>

- (a) All the Muslim members of the Unionist Party who were not the members of the Muslim League already, would join it.
- (b) In future elections and bye-elections to the Punjab Legislature, groups constituting the Unionist Party would jointly support candidates put up by their respective groups.
- (c) Muslim members elected on the League tickets would constitute the Muslim League Party in the legislature, but the combination would maintain its present name, the Unionist Party.
- (d) In view of this agreement the Provincial League Parliamentary Board would be reconstituted.

The example of the Punjab Premier, Sir Sikandar Hayat, the leader of the Unionist Party, was followed the very next day by Fazl-ul-Haq, the Prime Minister of Bengal and the leader of the Praja Krishak Party.<sup>2</sup>

---

\*Reader, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. For complete text of the Pact please see Lajpat Rai Nair, *Sikandar Hayat Khan* (Lahore, 1942), p. 57; Sir Khizr Hayat Khan, 'The 1937 Elections and the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact', published in *The Panjab Past and Present* (Patiala, October, 1976), pp. 372-73; and *The Tribune*, Lahore, 16.10.1937.
2. *The Tribune*, Lahore, 17.10.1937.



Ever since its conclusion, the Pact has remained a subject of serious controversy among the scholars and publicists in terms of the the pattern of political culture it helped to grow in the country in general and in the Punjab in particular during the period of its existence i. e. till April 1944. The basic questions about the wisdom of Sikandar Hayat in signing this Pact have remained the same through the years which were raised immediately after its conclusion by various organised political parties and intra-party factions, representing different political ideologies and ideas which had evolved in course of time from the social structure of the province. These doubts can be summed up as under :

- (a) In view of the thumping majority with which the Unionist Party had emerged in the General Elections of 1937, was the conclusion of this Pact with Jinnah inevitable or even desirable ?
- (b) Did the Pact not reflect Sikandar's lack of far-sight with regard to the communal problem ?
- (c) Why did Sikandar not think that the Pact would be interpreted as the consolidation of the Muslim communal forces in the Punjab and Bengal and would lead to the strengthening of Hindu communalism, and both would pose a grave challenge to the nationalist and socialist forces which then had been united in the Punjab under the leadership of the Congress ?
- (d) Why did Sikandar not realise that the ratification of this Pact by all the Muslim legislators of the Punjab would provide Jinnah with a strong Muslim base in the province and would eventually corrode the secular image of the Unionist leadership ?

Before investigating these questions, it is desirable that the political situation of the Punjab should be briefly surveyed so that Sikandar's motives in concluding this Pact are properly evaluated. Main characteristics of the then political scene may be summed up as :

Communal representation to different communities through separate electorates with each category further divided into rural and urban constituencies, and over representation to regressive landholders had become political realities and were to continue so long as British rule lasted in India.

Power politics of the Punjab especially in the legislative

Assembly was being controlled by the upper and middle classes because universal franchise had not been conceded under the constitution of 1935. Only 12% of the population had been given the right to vote.<sup>3</sup>

Communal tension and communal murders were on the increase in the province except during the first half of January 1937.<sup>4</sup> Religious issues were being exploited for political ends unscrupulously.

Communal Parties like the Hindu Mahasabha (National Progressive Party),<sup>5</sup> and pro-government and landlords dominated Khalsa National and Unionist Parties enjoyed the patronage of the alien government and its bureaucracy. Though for the consumption of their respective electorates, sometimes they criticised the government for not conceding adequate representation to their respective communities in government services and in the legislature and even its economic policies yet they never resorted to such direct action programmes as *satyagraha*, non-cooperation and civil disobedience.

Since March 1936, Congress had launched a vigorous campaign in the Punjab for reaching both the urban and rural people, especially the latter and spreading among them the ideas of socialism with the argument that these would materialise only after the foreign capitalist government had been expelled.<sup>6</sup> The results of 1937 elections to the Punjab legislature showed that it had acquired a considerable social base in the rural Punjab. Out of its 19 M.L.As., 10 had been elected from the rural constituencies.<sup>7</sup> Its primary membership also increased in the province during the period under review. While in 1936 it could enroll 20,000 members against its quota of 50,000 but by October 1937, it had crossed the target of 63,000. Even the Punjab Government admitted that the rural mass contact programme of the Congress had made a considerable advance.<sup>8</sup> Congress had also united almost all

3. Yadav, K. C., *Elections in Punjab, 1920-1947* (Tokyo, 1981), p. 19.

4. Report on situation in the Punjab for the first half of January 1937, Home Dept. Poll, January 1937, File No. 18/1/37, p. 13. For more details see, Report on situation in the Punjab from March 1936 to October 1937.

5. Members of the Hindu Election Board who had secured election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and few others including Dr. Gokul Chand Narang formed the National Progressive Party in February 1937. *Ibid.* February 1937, File No. 18/2/37.

6. *Ibid.*, May 1936, File No. 8/5/1936, p. 13.

7. This conclusion has been drawn from the information given in Reforms Office, Franchise, File No. 20/III/36-F, pp. 78-79, 268 and 272.

8. Home Dept. Poll, September 1936, File No. 18/1/36, p. 62, April 1937, 18/4/37, p. 1; October 1937, File No. 18/10/37, p. 7; also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 12.10.1937.



the communist and socialist parties under the banner of the Congress socialist Party.<sup>9</sup> Of the five communists elected to the Punjab legislature in the elections of 1937, four had fought on the Congress ticket and the fifth Sohni Singh Josh had been supported by it.<sup>10</sup> In a subsequent bye-election, Teja Singh Swatantra was also elected unopposed on its ticket.<sup>11</sup>

After the above mentioned elections Congress became the chief opposition party in the Punjab legislature, and was supported by the Akalis, Majlis-i-Ittihad-i-Millat, and the Ahrars in opposing Government's various measures.<sup>12</sup> By September 1937, Congress had become so critical of Sikandar Hayat's political policies and programmes that it withdrew its nominees from the All-Parties Unity Conference which had been set up by Sikandar Hyat in June 1937 to draw guidelines for the solution of the communal riots and to promote communal harmony in the province.<sup>13</sup> From March 25-31, 1937 Congress had organised 94 meetings throughout the province impressing upon the people to observe *hartal* on the Anti-constitution Day on 1st April to protest against the formation of the Unionist Ministry.<sup>14</sup> Since July the Congress combine had also started a brisk campaign for the release of political prisoners in the Punjab and publicly condemned the anti-national stance of the Unionist Government on this issue.<sup>15</sup> During this period it criticised very bitterly the high salaries of the Unionist Ministers, general policies of the Unionist Government and the excessive powers which it had given to police.<sup>16</sup> Even on 3rd October also

9. Home Deptt. Poll., May 1936, File No. 18/5/36, p. 53; June 1936, File No. 18/6/36, p. 14; and August 1936, File No. 18/8/36, p. 15.

10. *Ibid.*, February 1937, File No. 18/2/37, p. 16.

11. *Ibid.*, April 1937, File No. 18/4/37, p. 1; and May 1937, File No. 18/5/37, p. 27.

12. *Ibid.*, February 1937, File No. 18/2/37, p. 16; and September 1937, File No. 18/9/37, p. 1. In his interview with Paul Wallace on 7.5.1964, Dr Gopi Chand Bhargava stated that "in the 1937 elections some Sikhs got elected on Congress ticket, some on Akali. After six months, all were just Congress." Harbans Singh and N. G. Barrier (ed.), *Essays in Honour of Dr Ganda Singh* (Patna, 1976), p. 397.

13. Home Deptt. Poll., September 1937, File No. 18/9/37, pp. 7-8; also *Indian Annual Register*, Calcutta, 1937, Vol. I, p. 1092; also *The Tribune*, Lahore, 27.6.1937 and 15.9.1937.

14. Home Deptt. Poll., March 1937, File No. 18/3/37, p. 1; and April 1937, File No. 18/4/37, p. 1.

15. Gopal, S., *Jawaharlal Nehru, A Biography*, Vol. I (Bombay, 1956), p. 218; also Home Deptt. Poll., August 1937, File No. 18/8/37, p. 2; and October 1937, File No. 11/10/37, p. 2.

16. Home Deptt. Poll., August 1937, File No. 18/8/37. Supplement to F. R. Pb., for the first half of August 1937. Para 1.

it observed 'Anti-Ministry Day' by organizing *harfals*, processions and public meetings<sup>17</sup> It branded Sikandar's Government not only pro-British but also 'fascist'.<sup>18</sup>

That the position of Congress among the Muslims was weak in comparison to both the Unionist Party and Muslim league is obvious from the fact that in 1937 elections it put up only 4 Muslim candidates, out of whom just 2 were elected. Therefore in April 1937, it launched the Muslim Mass Contact Programme both in urban and rural areas. By enrolling a large number of Muslims as its members, Congress wanted to further broadbase the struggle for freedom.<sup>19</sup> Persistent pursuance of this programme by the Congress increased Jinnah's uneasiness. On 15 October 1937, the day on which the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact was approved, Jinnah said in his presidential address at the Lucknow session of the Muslim League that the Muslim Mass Contact Programme of the Congress was calculated to divide, weaken and break the Mussalmans and to detach them from their accredited leaders.

In September 1937, Master Tara Singh was determined to embarrass the Unionist Government, especially its Revenue Minister, Sir Sundar Singh Majithia by raising the communally sensitive issues of *Jhatka* and music before the mosques.

Rejection of the Muslim League's offer to the Congress for forming a coalition ministry in United Provinces in June 1937 hurt Jinnah's vanity and he decided to teach a lesson to the Congress. But how could he materialise his desire without bringing the Muslim majority provinces, especially the Punjab and Bengal, under his control? Therefore Jinnah also launched the Muslim Mass Contact Campaign.

Thus during 1937, Sikandar Hayat, Jinnah, and the British Government had been under a sustained attack of all the progressive and nationalist forces led by the Congress. It was becoming increasingly difficult for the Government to resist Congress demands. So Sir H.D. Craik, Home Member of the Government of India advised Sikandar to publicly support Jinnah in his political fight against the the Congress.

Now coming to the question that in view of the thumping majority of the Unionists in the Punjab Legislative Assembly Sikandar should

17. *Ibid*, October 1937, File No. 18/10/37, p. 1.

18. *The Tribune*, Lahore. 25.7.1937.

19. Rajendra Prasad Papers, File No. 1/37, National Archives of India.



not have made the Pact with Jinnah, it should be noted that even though out of 90 Muslim M.L.As: 78 belonged to the Unionist Party, yet it was no indication of its popularity among the Muslim masses. Similarly, although there were 14 Hindu M.L.As in this party but 9 of them had been elected from the south-eastern Punjab. So far as Sikh constituencies were concerned, it did not contest any. At the most it enjoyed support upto the middle level of the landholders because, as already mentioned, only 12 per cent of the population had been enfranchised under the constitution of 1935. Moreover this limited franchise was also based on such qualifications as property, education, income-tax payment, military service and minimum annual land revenue payment of Rs. 25.<sup>20</sup>

Jinnah's overt stand for the protection of the rights of the Muslims in the name of Islam was such that Sikandar Hayat could not oppose it openly for two reasons. First, he himself was committed to the protection of the Muslim rights though not on sectarian grounds. Secondly, such a posture would have jeopardised the stability of his ministry. Even in 1936, Jinnah had nominated 8 Muslim Unionists to the Punjab Provincial Muslim League Council.<sup>21</sup> The main thrust of Jinnah's arguments—covertly aimed at his own political elevation, was that image of the Muslim community should be so raised that it must be invited as a 'third party' to the settlement to be reached between the British Government and the Congress about the future of India. While the Congress considered these issues trivial which could be settled after India had won her independence,<sup>22</sup> Jinnah insisted that the questions of Muslims' rights, weightage and safeguards should be decided first. Being essentially a practical politician and not an ardent nationalist, Sikandar put his weight on Jinnah's side in this Congress-League controversy since that could keep his Prime Minister-ship safe in the Punjab, and please the British Indian authorities also. The result was the conclusion of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact on 15 October, 1937.

The Pact attracted widely divergent comments from the leaders of various political parties, and the press. *The Daily Herald* (Lahore, 18.10.1937), an organ of the Hindu Mahasabha made a self-contradictory suggestion, meant only for the enlightened electorate. It wrote that the Pact had consolidated the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal,

20. *Punjab Government Gazette Extraordinary*, 13.11.1936, para 1831.

21. Home Dept., Poll., May 1936, File No. 18/5/1936, p. 50.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

and Sind would follow soon. Congress should also consolidate the Hindus through the *Hindu Sangthan*. Only then Hindu-Muslim Unity would be possible. Similar communal proposals were also made by Bhai Parmanand and Raja Narendra Nath whose Hindu Sabha group continued to support Sikandar's government in the Punjab Legislature even after the conclusion of this Pact.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, Fateh Jang Singh, M.L.A. observed that due to this Pact, he had no respect for the Unionist Party in his heart.<sup>24</sup> To give a fight to the reactionary communal forces which had been further strengthened by this Pact, Master Tara Singh called upon all the Akali M.L.As to sign the Congress pledge.<sup>25</sup> Expressing moderates' or liberals' disappointment, Professor Gulshan Rai wrote that they had been supporting on selective basis the economic programmes of the Unionist Government in the hope that it would remain non-communal. But now that it had joined hands with the Muslim League, liberals should join the Congress and strengthen the national forces fighting for the freedom of the country.<sup>26</sup> Even Chaudhri Sir Chhotu Ram remarked that personally he regarded the move as an indication of a spirit which was discouraging and depressing from a purely national point of view.<sup>27</sup>

However, the Muslim League leaders like Barkat Ali looked upon the Pact from the viewpoint of the Muslim League. They commented that by virtue of this Pact, the central Muslim League had acquired the right to interfere in the affairs of the Unionist Government.

As Sikandar was an astute politician, during his life time Jinnah could not meddle in the Punjab affairs. Jinnah even refused to be drawn in the quarrels between the old Muslim Leaguers like Gulam Rasul and Barkat Ali on the one side and Sikandar's followers on the other. Besides, Sikandar continued to be an important member of the League till his death in December, 1942. It was during the Premiership of Sir Khizr Hayat—a straightforward man—that the trouble started and took a serious turn in April 1944. By this time Jinnah's hold on Muslim politics had improved a good deal. Currently he was being wooed by the Congress for a settlement. Unlike 1937, now the balance of power in Indian politics rested with him. With the

---

23. *The Tribune*, Lahore, 24.10.1937.

24. *The Pratap*, Lahore, 6.11.1937.

25. *The Tribune*, Lahore, 20.10.1937.

26. *Ibid.*, 22.10.1937.

27. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 19.10.1937.



offer of partition as contained in the C.R. Formula (1944) Jinnah had already won half the battle for the creation of Pakistan. He asked Sir Khizr Hayat to change the name of the Unionist Ministry to Muslim League coalition ministry. On his refusal to comply, Khizr was expelled from the Muslim League in May 1944, and that historic event marked the end of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact also.

As such, the Pact was the outcome of the manipulations of three reactionary forces with vested interests, namely, the British Indian Government which was finding it difficult to resist the demands of Congress and its other progressive allies due to their ever increasing popularity among the masses both in urban and rural areas in the recent past; Jinnah who was keen to avenge upon the Congress for it had declined his offer of forming a coalition ministry in U.P.; and Sikandar Hayat who was only concerned about his Prime Ministership and not the freedom of the country. However, after the publication of the Pact, moderates, giving up constitutionalism, started identifying themselves with the mainstream of the freedom struggle either by joining the Congress or by supporting it. The Pact also accelerated in a big way the polarisation of the nationalist or progressive forces and the regressive and communal forces which also indicated that the upper and middle class power politics would not last long.

Last though not the least, with this Pact started the disintegration of the non-sectarian regional parties in general and of the Unionist Party in particular. It proved that the regional parties were also inadequate to offset communal divisions which, in fact, were engineered by the British authorities through the reactionary and egotist Indian leaders of the upper classes.

## Giani Pritam Singh and the Indian National Army

Balbir Singh\*

Although much have been written and discussed about Netaji Subash Chander Bose and General Mohan Singh's role in founding Indian National Army but Giani Pritam Singh's role in its establishment needs to be delineated.

Giani Pritam Singh took active part in the freedom struggle of the country. Since he was trained missionary in Sikh theology, he was known as Giani.<sup>1</sup> He led a batch of volunteers to Kashmir.<sup>2</sup> In 1930, he led a *Jatha* of about three hundred Akalis to Peshawar to help Khudai Khidmatgars. They were stopped near Gujrat and were arrested. He was sentenced to eight month's imprisonment. While in jail he got a chance to meet many freedom fighters and revolutionaries.

After releasing from jail in 1930, he migrated to Thailand where he was offered the post of missionary by Singh Sabha, Bangkok.<sup>3</sup> In Thailand there were some ardently nationalist Indians drawn mainly from the Sikh community, who were ready to take up any anti-British activity which could help in making India free. Giani Pritam Singh joined that group. One of the members of the group was Baba Amar Singh, an elderly Sikh revolutionary who had been imprisoned during the First World War for a long period. He was well known on account of his role in the revolutionary activities against the British Government. On release from jail in 1940, he joined hands with Pritam Singh. Amar Singh and Pritam Singh organised a secret organization

---

\*Lecturer, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Giani Pritam Singh was born in village Nagoki Sarli Khurd, Distt. Lyallpur in November 1910. His father's name was Mayia Singh. His father was fond of reading books and had good command over Urdu and Persian. Pritam Singh received his early education in Khalsa High School, Chak No. 41. After the completion of his early education, he joined Agriculture College, Lyallpur where he came in contact with the leaders of freedom movement.
2. Statement of Col. Niranjana Singh Gill, Oral History Cell, Punjab Historical Studies Department, Punjabi University, Patiala (Hereafter quoted as O. H. C).
3. Ghosh, K. K., *The Indian National Army* (Meerut, 1969), pp. 13-36.



known as Independent League of India. A large number of followers were enrolled in this organisation. There is an evidence that this group was influenced by the Ghadarites who had sought to foment revolution against the British in India as some of them were former members of the Ghadr Party. These Ghadr elements had taken refuge in Bangkok in early thirties of the century and it is evident that some of them later joined the organisation before the outbreak of War. Baba Amar Singh was arrested during the War together with Sohan Lal another member of the Ghadr Party. With the outbreak of War, Pritam Singh<sup>4</sup> openly proclaimed the existence of the Independent League of India in Bangkok.

For sometime prior to the outbreak of the War, Pritam Singh with the help of his workers in south Thailand was carrying on secret propaganda among Indian troops of British Indian Army stationed near the Thai-Malaya border. In a letter dated September 8, 1941, Pritam Singh addressed the Indian soldiers in Malaya and Burma urging them not to fight the Axis Powers.<sup>5</sup> He advised them never to obey the orders of their English Commanders and should never fight Japan, Germany or any other country which was the enemy of the British.<sup>6</sup>

A branch of the Indian Independence League was formed at Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Federated Malaya States on January 16, 1942 at a large gathering of Indians from all over Selangor State. Giani Pritam Singh and Major Fuziwara addressed the gathering and assured them that the Japanese Government would give Indians every possible assistance in their effort to win their country's freedom.<sup>7</sup>

On reaching Singapore and Malaya, Giani Pritam Singh did not waste any time in forming the Independence League of India amongst the civilians who were its sympathisers, and Mr. R. Gadhvan was made its President.<sup>8</sup>

A meeting of the representatives of the Indian Independence League of Thailand and Malaya was held at Singapore on March 9, 1942. Swami Satyanand Puri said that he had cabled from Bangkok to Subash Chander Bose in Germany on February 2, 1942. He further said that he invited Subash to come and lead the movement in East-

---

4. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-36.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Statement of General Mohan Singh, O. H. C.

8. Desai, W. S., *India and Burma* (Calcutta, 1954). p. 31.

Asia and that Subash had agreed to do so.<sup>9</sup>

In the meanwhile, Giani Pritam Singh left Bangkok by air on December 10 and accompanied by Major Fujiwara and other Japanese Army officers, crossed the Thai-Malaya border and contacted the Indian Army Officers. The fateful and historic meeting between Giani Pritam Singh and Captain Mohan Singh took place in the Jungles near Jitra. It may be said without exaggeration that the concept of the First Indian National Army was born on that fateful day.<sup>10</sup> He saw the Indian National Tri colour on the bonnet of one of the cars accompanying the Japanese forces and decided to approach the Japanese. When Captain Mohan Singh met Giani Pritam Singh, the later explained to Mohan Singh the aims and objects of the Indian Independence League and urged him to join the League and raise the Indian National Army. After prolonged discussions in which Major Fujiwara also took part, Captain Mohan Singh agreed to join the Indian Independence Movement and fight against the British. It was in this way that Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) was symbolically formed at Jitra.<sup>11</sup>

The Singapore Conference proved to be a decisive step toward founding Indian National Army. Raghavan presided over the Conference. Others who participated in the Conference were Baba Amar Singh, Giani Pritam Singh, Swami Satyanand Puri, K. P. K. Menon, Captain Mohan Singh, Lt. Col. Niranjana Singh Gill and Major M. Z. Kian. One of the proposals of Singapore conference was to request Subhash to come to Tokyo and accept the leadership of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia. Later on Tokyo Conference was organised to give a concrete shape to the proposal adopted at Singapore conference. A dark shadow fell on the Tokyo conference when disaster overtook the plane carrying four important delegates namely Swami Satyanand Puri, Giani Pritam Singh, Captain Mohammad Akram and Nilakanta. They had taken off from Saigon on March 13, 1942 and nothing was heard of them afterwards. However, the Tokyo Conference met on March 28 with Ras Behari Bose in the Chair. In a message to the Conference, the Japanese Prime Minister, General Tojo remarked that the Japanese Government expected that Indians would throw the British yoke by themselves and create an independent India.<sup>12</sup> The Japanese Govern-

9. Statement of Raja Mahendra Pratap, O. H. C.

10. Ayer, S. A., *Story of I.N.A.* (Delhi, 1972), p. 28.

11. Madan Gopal, *Life and Times of Subhas Chandra Bose* (Delhi, 1970), p. 271.

12. *Ibid.*



ment will not hesitate render all possible help in this respect, The message added that the continued efforts of Giani Pritam Singh achieved the goal and he sacrificed his life with other companions for the sake of the country.<sup>13</sup>

The dream of Giani Pritam Singh was fulfilled when Netaji Subash Chander Bose and General Mohan Singh formed the Indian National Army after the dissolution of Indian Independence League. It is remarkable to note that a Punjabi was the first in the South East-Asia to organise the scattered nationalist elements in the form of India's Independence League.

---

13. Palta, K. R., *My Adventures with the I.N.A.* (Lahore, 1946), p. 23.

## Upsurge in the Tenant Agitation in Patiala State (1937-1939)

Mohinder Singh\*

The British rulers of India exploited the masses for their own benefit. The impact of British imperialism was felt by all sections of the Indian society but most seriously affected by the fleecing nature of the British industrial and agrarian policies was the peasantry. The condition of the peasantry was all the more miserable in the Indian States where it had not only to provide cheap raw materials for the British industry but also to undergo huge exploitation at the hands of the native feudal elements. In fact, the British rulers had given a free hand to the Indian Princes and landlords to impose their own conditions on the peasantry. The ostensible purpose of this collusion between the British rulers and the Native Princes was to suppress the rising tide of nationalism in India.<sup>1</sup> The growing misery of the peasantry gave rise to militant peasant movements in different parts of the country. The present article is intended to investigate one such uprising of the tenants in the Patiala State.

The relations between the landlords and the tenants in the Patiala State had been "strained and bitter for generations."<sup>2</sup> The tenants were deprived of their proprietary rights over land by the landlords. This task was accomplished by making false entries in revenue records in collusion with the revenue officials. The tenants protested against this injustice to Maharaja by staging a *dharna* before his official residence at Patiala. They also filed suits in the law courts for the restoration of their proprietary rights. But the executive and the courts took a partisan view of the problem and failed to give justice to the tenants. Instead,

---

\*Lecturer in History, Directorate of Correspondence Courses, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. For details see, Erik Komaroff, 'Content and Principal Forms of the Evolution of Agrarian Relations in India in the 19th century' in *New Indian Studies by Soviet Scholars*, USSR Academy of Sciences, No. 33, 1976, pp. 41-42.

2. Report on Agrarian Reforms in PEPSU, Government of India, Ministry of States, 1952, p. 7.



the tenants were burdened with many feudal levies under different land settlements. These feudal levies and obligations left the tenants completely at the mercy of the landlords. The exploitation of the tenants by the landlords reached its height with the introduction of *kankut* and *batai* system in 1925. Under this system, the landlord's share in the produce was determined on the basis of rough estimate of the standing crop by government officials. The landlords bribed these officials to get an inflated estimate of the produce. The tenants had to pay *batai* to the landlords on the basis of highly inflated calculation. Consequently an insignificant share of the produce was left with the tenants.

The tenants gradually started organising themselves to put an end to their exploitation at the hands of the landlords. However, during the early stages of the struggle against *biswedari*, the protest was largely peaceful. Sending deputations along with petitions to the Maharaja and filing suits in the law courts were the main forms of protest. But such peaceful protests fell on deaf ears. In fact, the technique of peaceful organisation and protest had been developed and perfected in the British Indian provinces. This technique fell flat when planted in the soil of the Indian states.<sup>3</sup> The autocratic rulers in the States saw even the mildest forms of protest with suspicious eyes and crushed them ruthlessly. Moreover, lack of leadership and organisation proved a stumbling block in the way of a militant tenant movement.

But there was a sudden upsurge in the tenant agitation in the Patiala State during the period of 1937-39. The tenant struggle lost its earlier passive character and assumed a militant posture. Its intensity and strength alarmed the State autocracy and the landlords. This change in the nature of the tenant agitation was brought about by a combination of fortuitous circumstances. The economic crises of 1930's worsened the conditions of the tenants and forced them to fight for their rights on militant lines. The establishment of the Punjab Kisan Sabha in 1936, provided the tenants with an organisation which could give direction and guidance to them. As the Punjab Kisan Sabha was dominated by militant elements drawn from earlier anti-imperialist movements, i.e. Ghadar Movement, Khilafat Movement, Akali movements and Terrorist Movement, it changed the passive orientation of the tenant struggle.<sup>4</sup> The Praja Mandal exhorted the peasants to form

3. Mukherjee, Mridula, 'Peasant Movement in a Princely State, Patiala, 1937-48', *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, session XV, 1981.

4. Presidential Address delivered by Baba Gurmukh Singh, President, Kisan Committee at the Eighth Annual Conference of State Kisan Committee held at Jangpur on 21 Sept., 1946.

their own committees and get affiliated with the Tehsil Kisan Committees so that they may join the broader Kisan Movement in India. Another important factor that contributed to the upsurge in the tenant agitation was the polarisation in the ranks of the Praja Mandal. After the death of Sewa Singh Thikriwala in 1935, the Praja Mandal leadership was divided into two groups led by Harchand Singh Jeji, a feudal lord of the Patiala State who wanted to continue the activities of the Praja Mandal for the removal of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh. However, the other group comprising Bhagwan Singh Longowalia, Jagir Singh Joga, Wazir Singh Daftriwala and Pritam Singh Gojran came under the influence of socialist ideas and wanted the Praja Mandal to take up common causes. With this polarisation in the ranks of Praja Mandal, the focus of political action shifted to the peasantry. Lastly, the establishment of popular ministries after the 1937 elections to the provincial assemblies created a new awakening among the tenants. They realised that the peasants in the Congress-ruled provinces enjoyed better facilities than the peasants of the Princely States. As a result of the combination of these factors, the tenant agitation in Patiala State took a militant turn in 1937.

November 25, 1937 marked the beginning of militant tenant movement in the Patiala State. On that day, a violent clash took place between the tenants and *biswedars* of Qilla Hakiman at the time of *batai*. Two tenants were killed and nine others injured in police firing.<sup>5</sup> Though the tenants were non-violent, the official version claimed that the police had to open fire in self-defence.<sup>6</sup> The high-handed action of the police and the one-sided enquiry that followed it, stirred the tenants to action. By 1938, there were open tenant revolts against the *batai* system in villages like Qilla Hakiman, Rajomajra, Bhadaur, Kishengarh, and Sadha Singhwala.<sup>7</sup>

The Sixth All India States People's Conference was held at Ludhiana in February 1939. A large number of Praja Mandal leaders from the Patiala State attended the Conference. It was at this Conference that the slogan of 'no batai' for the Patiala tenants was coined. The States People's Conference also helped the Praja Mandal in extending its influence to urban areas. The slogan of 'no batai' was subsequently

---

5. Patiala State Records, P.M.'s Office File No. 6157, Punjab State Archives, Patiala. (Henceforth referred to as PSA).

6. *Ibid.*

7. Patiala State Records, *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File Nos. 652, 1261, 1263 and 2077, PSA.



endorsed at a tenants conference held at Jethuke on April 23-24, 1939. The Conference also passed several resolutions in support of the demands of the tenants.<sup>8</sup>

The Muzara Kisan Committee, which had been functioning under the presidentship of Narain Singh Bhadaur, sprang into action in order to implement the slogan of 'no batai.' The offices of the Muzara Committee were set up at Budhlada, Bluchcho and Shena. These places were situated outside the Patiala State but were convenient for conducting propaganda work in the villages of the State.<sup>9</sup> The Muzara Kisan Committee asked the tenants to refuse the payment (*batai*) to the landlords during the rabi season of 1939. The 'no batai' campaign was started from Bhadaur, which was the home village of Narain Singh, the President of the Muzara Kisan Committee. The agitation soon spread to many villages. The tenants not only refused to pay *batai* but began to take possession of land from which they had been earlier ejected. The villages which were most seriously affected by the non-payment of *batai* campaign included Bhadaur, Kishangarh, Sadha Singhwala, Kot Dunna, Patti Deepgarh, Jangiana, Ghatwali, Bir Khurd, Bakshiwala, Gobindgarh and Nihargarh. The government was so unnerved by the intensity of the agitation that the Prime Minister in his letter to the Maharaja stressed the necessity of adopting strong measures for suppressing the movement before the spread of the contagion and taking the form of a wide-spread Kisan Movement.<sup>10</sup> The government also believed that the tenant agitation was "getting deeply-rooted in consequence of frantic wire-pulling from various sources outside and inside the State."<sup>11</sup>

The militancy of the tenant agitation can be gauged from the resolutions passed by the Muzara Kisan Committee at its meeting held at Mansa on 26 September 1939. The following resolutions were passed at this meeting:<sup>12</sup>

- (i) No *muzara* should have any sort of association with the *hiswedars*. Even if a *muzara* is found calling 'Fateh' to the *hiswedars*, he will be fined Rs. 5/-.

8. For details of these resolutions, see Patiala State Records, *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File No. 2077, PSA.

9. *Ibid.*

10. I. G. Police confidential note to P. M. dated 30 June 1939, Patiala State Records *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File No. 2077, PSA.

11. Confidential Weekly Diary No. 19281-140-C, dated 19 May 1939.

12. For details of the resolutions passed at this meeting, see Patiala State Records, P.M.'s Office File No. 1553, PSA.

- (ii) No *batai* be paid at all. He, who pays it, will be excommunicated. None will contact matrimonial alliances with him. The past relationship will be severed
- (iii) No *kankut* or *girdawari* be got affected. A *biswedari* who accompanies the *kankut* officer or the *girdawar*, should be resisted, attacking him, if necessary.
- (iv) In case the state government orders the forcible payment of *batai*, the crops be laid waste before any officer visits them to effect the *batai*. Corn should not be kept in the houses to make it escape the notice of the state employees.
- (v) The menials or *kamins* be told that they will not receive their wages, if they continue their relations with the *biswedars*. If a *kamin* still insists upon this, he will be compelled to leave the village.
- (vi) Compliance of orders issued by any court should not be made. If a *muzara* is fined, he should not pay it but undergo imprisonment in default of payment of fine.
- (vii) The *biswedars* be put to trouble by every method and they should be compelled to leave their villages, for in every *biswedari* village there resides only one or two *biswedari* families and the remaining are *muzaras*. It is, therefore, easy for them to tease the *biswedars*.
- (viii) Until *batai* is abolished, recruits should not be supplied for the war; propaganda in this connection should be carried in the villages.
- (ix) The *muzaras* have not received reply to the petitions they sent to His Highness and the Political Agent. A notice should, therefore, be delivered requesting a reply within a week, failing which revolt be caused by spreading propaganda from village to village which the government may find difficult to control.
- (x) Rupee one per *hal* be raised from every *muzara* by way of subscription. He, who refused to subscribe this sum, should be boycotted.
- (xi) The posters which are got published for the *muzaras* should not be handed over to any *biswedari* or his employee. They should be distributed among the public.

It is evident from the above resolutions that the tenants hated the *biswedari* system so much that they were prepared to go to the



extent of revolting against the State. Infact, the collusion between the feudal elements and State autocracy left the tenants with no alternative except to strike at the roots of the whole system.

Right from the beginning, the State administration adopted a repressive policy towards the agitation. The State police let loose a 'reign of terror.' The tenants who refused to pay *batai* were beaten up, their houses ransacked and their women were maltreated. The police atrocities on the *muzaras* were brought to the notice of the Maharaja by the Muzara Kisan Committee through telegrams.<sup>13</sup> In order to seek the redressal of their grievances and release of the arrested tenants, the Muzara Committee decided to send two *jathas* of tenants, one to the British Agent to the States in Simla and the second to the Maharaja in Chail. A large number of tenants from Bhadaur, Tamkot, Rampura, Kot Dunna, Jeondan, Dalel Singhwala and Jalalidiwala gathered at Thakatupura in Ferozepur district on the last day of May 1939.<sup>14</sup> A batch of one hundred was selected to present the case of the tenants before the British Agent at Simla. The *jatha* was intercepted at Ludhiana by the Deputy Commissioner who persuaded the tenants to send a delegation of five persons to Simla. The delegation ultimately met the Agent on 21 June and presented a memorandum on *muzara* demands to him. The Agent assured the deputationists that he would take up their case with the Paramount Power and also with the Maharaja of Patiala.<sup>15</sup>

Another *jatha* comprising Gujjar Singh Bahadur, Budh Singh Dipgarh, Dharam Singh Fakkar, Nand Singh Kishangarh and Partap Singh Jiwan Singhwala tried to meet the Maharaja at Chail.<sup>16</sup> Harchand Singh Jeji, the father-in-law of Maharaja came to Kandaghat to meet the delegation but gave no assurance to the deputationists about their demands. The *muzaras* reiterated their demands at a conference held at Chak Bhai Ram Singh in Ferozepur District on 25 July 1939.<sup>17</sup>

The determined struggle of the tenants ultimately bore fruit. The Maharaja announced the appointment of a Commission headed

13. The Maharaja was at that time in his summer hill resort at Chail. See, Patiala State Records, *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File No. 2077, PSA.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. Patiala State Records, P.M.'s File No. 5804, PSA.

by Captain M.N. Raina, Law Minister of the State to enquire into the causes of the dispute between the *biswedars* and the tenants.<sup>18</sup> At a conference held at Khadial, the tenants demanded that there should be no ejectments of the tenants till the Enquiry Commission completed its report.<sup>19</sup> At this juncture, when the tenant agitation appeared to have registered substantial gains, a calamity struck it. The outbreak of World War II on 1 September 1939 provided the ruler of the Patiala State an opportunity to go back on his promises and crush the movement. The government changed its conciliatory attitude to its earlier policy of repression. The mobilization of resources for the war could be possible only if there was perfect peace and tranquility in all parts of the country. Consequently, the British Government expected the Indian States to give their maximum co-operation in its war efforts by ensuring perfect law and order in their areas. The Prime Minister called a meeting of the top functionaries of the State on 19 September to discuss the situation. It was generally felt by those present that "...the movement was not sporadic but was assuming the shape of a mass movement." It was decided to adopt these measures to cope with the situation:<sup>20</sup> The ring leaders of the *muzaras* be hauled up; harsh punishments under sections 447 and 107 of I.P.C. be given; the police should render effective assistance in prevention of criminal trespass; land cases be speedily disposed off; extreme policy to deal with tenants truculence be determined; police force be augmented; perfect liaison between revenue, police and judicial departments be kept; Section 424 of I.P.C. might be made cognizable and non-bailable; when possession is awarded on ejectment of a tenant, it should be done publicly, i.e. in the presence of a larger number of persons and that the pending cases be vigorously prosecuted.

The above mentioned panel and administrative measures reveal that the government was not serious about its earlier promises and wanted to suppress the agitations by subtle manipulation and deceit. The element of force and cunningness in the new policy of the government began to bear fruit. By the end of 1939, the movement lost momentum. The resistance of the tenants to the payment of *batai* began to decline. In fact, the movement declined as fast as it had grown. Given the limited sources at their disposal, the tenants could

18. *Ibid.*

19. Patiala State Records, *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File No. 2077, PSA.

20. *Ibid.*



not be expected to carry on the movement for a long duration. The government separated the leaders from the tenants. While the former were crushed or imprisoned, the latter were conciliated or frightened into submission. Although the upsurge in the tenant agitation subsided in a short period of time, it left its mark on the minds of the tenants. The tenants realised that the promises of the government for reforms could not be taken for granted. It also dawned on them that for a prolonged struggle against the State autocracy, a sound and well-knit organisation was an essential pre-requisite. These lessons proved helpful to the tenants in their struggle against the *biswedari* in the post-war period.

## Police Firing in Dhami State (July 16, 1939) : An Important Event in the Simla Hill States

C. L. Datta\*

The Simla Hill States situated in the western Himalaya, around Simla, the summer capital of the British Indian Government, had an area of about 5,500 square miles, and their population was a little over a million in 1947. They were about twenty in number with ten feudatory states. These states differed greatly in size : the largest of them, Bashahr had an area of more than 3,500 square miles of mountainous terrain, thirteen states were less than one hundred square miles and three less than ten square miles in area.<sup>1</sup>

The rulers of these states claimed that they were descendants of the Rajputs. Most of them appeared to have obtained their territories by conquest in very early times.<sup>2</sup> These states underwent many vicissitudes. In the first decade of the 19th century, most of them fell into the hands of the Gurkhas of Nepal. But after the Nepalese War (1814-16), the old rulers were for the most part reinstated and came under British protection. These rulers often continued to quarrel among themselves. However, neither the states nor their bickerings had any influence on the history of Northern India as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

The people of these states were very poor and backward. There were few schools and hospitals ; many social evils such as *begar* and forced labour<sup>4</sup> were prevalent in these states. Civil liberties were non-existent and the rule of law quite unknown. The autocratic rulers spent most of the state income on their personal pleasures and foreign tours.

---

\*Reader, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

1. Douie, J., *The Punjab, North-West Frontier Province & Kashmir* (Cambridge, 1916), p. 287; See also, V.P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States* (New Delhi, 1961), p. 283.
2. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 283.
3. *Punjab States Gazetteers*, Vol. III, *Simla Hill States, 1910* (Lahore, 1911), p. 5.
4. For details about *begar*, see C.L. Datta, 'The Simla Hill States under British Rule 1816-1856, and Construction of Roads and the Begar', *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, X Session, pp. 281-88.



Some of them who could not go to foreign countries spent winters at Poona. They cared little for their people and did not provide them even elementary educational or medical facilities. Yet, despite all this, the masses continued to suffer and till about the second quarter of the present century did not protest against the repressive measures of their rulers. The national movement did not appear to have much meaning for them.

One of the Simla Hill States was Dhami, situated about seventeen miles to the south-west of Simla. It had an area of 28 square miles and its population was about 5200. Its capital was Halog. Rana Dalip Singh, its ruler had succeeded to the Gaddi in January, 1920. He was educated at Bishop Cotton School, Simla and the Aitchison College, Lahore. He was given revenue training and forest training in Kangra district and Jubbal State respectively. In judicial and treasury work, he was trained at Simla. He was invested with the 'Ruling Powers' on January 6, 1930. However, like other rulers of the Simla Hill States, he functioned under the supervision of the Political Agent, Punjab Hill States who was stationed at Simla.

Despite his training and qualifications, Rana Dalip Singh ruled like a despot and was not popular among his subjects. The latter had many grievances against the Rana and in order to get them removed, they formed a Praja Mandal in July, 1939. On July 13, a general public meeting of the Dhami State subjects was held at Kasumpti in Simla. Despite the inclemency of weather and long distance, as many as about six hundred *zamindars* from Dhami State attended this meeting.<sup>5</sup> In the meeting, resolutions were passed demanding abolition of *begar* or forced labour, fifty per cent remission in land revenue due to failure of crops during the last three years, introduction of 'responsible government' in the State, recognition of Dhami State Praja Mandal<sup>6</sup> and removal of all restrictions and bans imposed on those subjects of Dhami State who had been exiles from the State and to allow them to resume their possessions of land and property in the State.

While sending a copy of these resolutions, Sita Ram Sharma, Secretary, Dhami Riasti Praja Mandal also wrote to Rana Dalip Singh that, if a reply was not received from him by July 15, a deputation of the Dhami State subjects led by Thakur Bhag Mal Santha,<sup>7</sup> General

5. *The Tribune*, Lahore, July 17, 1939.

6. *Ibid.*

7. He was proprietor of Imperial Hotel, Simla and belonged to an educated family of Jubbal State.

Secretary, the Himalaya Riasti Praja Mandal would wait upon him on July 16, in the evening at Halog.<sup>8</sup> The Rana, apprehending trouble, if such a deputation reached Halog, rushed to Simla to seek advice from Major R.R. Burnett, Political Agent, Punjab Hill States. The latter advised the Rana to issue a code prohibiting Bhag Mal Santha from entering Dhami State. The Rana did that and at the same time asked his supporters from Halog and the neighbouring villages to gather near his palace on July 16. However, he declared that he was willing to meet his subjects to discuss their grievances, if any.<sup>9</sup>

The deputation led by Bhag Mal, as decided earlier, marched from Simla to Dhami on July 16. When it reached Ghana-ki-Hatti, a place situated in Dhami State, it was stopped by the police who told Bhag Mal that he could not proceed to Halog. On his refusal not to stop, he was arrested and hand-cuffed. It is also said that at this place, the sub-inspector, in-charge of the police party, snatched the Congress flag from one of the deputationists and burnt it. As arranged previously in the meeting at Simla, groups of men from different parts of Dhami State continued to join Bhag Mal. By the time Bhag Mal and the police party reached Halog, the number of people rose to about 2,000. Near his palace, Rana Dalip Singh had gathered his relations, officials and supporters. When Bhag Mal was dragged to the prison, the crowd became violent. Sticks and stones were used by both the sides. To control the situation, Dhami Police opened fire in which two persons were killed and about fifty wounded, seven of them suffered serious injuries.<sup>10</sup> After having been informed by Rana Dalip Singh, about the tragedy, Major Burnett with armed police and a doctor set off for Halog. On reaching the capital in the morning on July 17, he took measures to prevent further *jathas* entering the state. Bhag Mal and two other leaders were imprisoned. The former was summarily tried under section 188/200 of Indian Penal Code and sentenced to three months rigorous imprisonment and a fine of rupees 400/-.<sup>11</sup> Thakur Kahn Singh Santha, brother of Thakur Bhag Mal, who went to Halog along with two other persons to seek interview with the arrested persons and offer bail were not allowed to do so,<sup>12</sup> nor Gurbakhsh Singh Advocate, Ambala who had gone to represent

8. *The Tribune*, July 17, 1939.

9. *Ibid.*, July 19, 1939.

10. *Ibid.*, July 18, 1939.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, July 31, 1939.



Santha was permitted to do that.<sup>13</sup>

The incident caused great consternation in the Simla Hill States. Many hundred terror-stricken subjects of Dhami State took shelter in Simla and the neighbouring states. Two mammoth meetings were held at Simla on July 17 and 18, under the auspices of the City Congress Committee in which impartial judicial enquiry was demanded in Dhami firing. Traders and shop-keepers of Simla observed Hartal on July 18, 1939.<sup>14</sup> To stop such meetings designed to further agitation against the Dhami State, on July 19, Mr. Broadhant, District Magistrate, Simla, issued an order under Section 4, Indian States Protection Act, prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons for two months within the municipal limits of Simla.<sup>15</sup>

The local leaders tried to enlist the support of national leaders. On July 27, a deputation consisting of Sham Lal, President Simla District Congress Committee, Sita Ram Sharma, Secretary, Dhami State Praja Mandal, Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur and Kahn Singh Sandhu, Bar-at-law, met Mahatama Gandhi in Delhi and apprised him about all that had happened in Dhami. A couple of days later, the same deputation met Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who then was the President of All India State People's Conference.<sup>16</sup> Making an appeal to the ruler of Dhami and the Paramount Power for holding impartial judicial enquiry, Jawaharlal Nehru remarked :

Firing on inoffensive human beings resulting in death and serious injury to large number of persons has now become normal occurrence in some of the Indian States. Yet the tragedy that was enacted in the little state of Dhami in the Simla Hills throws a flood of light on the conditions in these petty states and more specially on the attitude of the Paramount Power towards them... Dhami is a tiny state nestling in the hills in the very shadow of imperial Simla. This is true relic of feudal times, exists near and under the protection of Simla and thus demonstrates the close ties which bind British Imperialism with feudalism in India. It is natural for us to react with resentment and anger at such conditions and happenings. Something has happened that shows out for proper judicial enquiry... If no enquiry is held, we shall draw the inevitable conclusions adverse to the rulers and British

13. *Ibid* , July 18, 1939.

14. *Ibid.*, July 19, 1939.

15. *Ibid.*, July 20, 1939.

16. *Ibid* , July 28, 1939.

authority. Dhami and Simla will be judged together and condemned together.<sup>17</sup>

Despite all this, the Paramount Power and Rana Dalip Singh refused to appoint any impartial judicial tribunal. The Rana, however, appointed an Enquiry Committee of his own officials who in their report white-washed his actions and held the Praja Mandalists responsible for all trouble in Dhami State. A non-official Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Lala Duni Chand of Ambala, M.L.A. (Punjab) and Member of the All India Congress Committee was appointed.<sup>18</sup> This Committee, after interviewing many hundred witnesses including those who were wounded in the firing, prepared a detailed report, in which the *begar* system, illegal taxes imposed by the ruler of Dhami and use of force to realise them etc. were highlighted. A copy of this report was sent to the Political Secretary, Government of India, with a request that the perpetrators of atrocities be punished and the victims given relief and protection. However, the British Government did not take any action against either the Rana or his erring officials.

Nevertheless, this tragedy brought to light that not far away from Simla-the seat of British Indian Government, the people in the small hill states were still governed by despots whose rule was quite repressive. The autocratic rulers did not accord human treatment to their subjects and did not grant civil liberties, let alone, responsible government. The Paramount Power also took sides with the rulers and thus became a party to suppress the popular demands of the people in the remote hilly regions. Police-firing in Dhami State quickened political consciousness in the Simla Hill States and intensified people's struggle against their rulers.

---

17. *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, August, 1939.

18. *The Tribune*, July 31, 1939.



## The Tenant Movement in Pepsu (1948—1955)

Karanbir Singh Mann\*

The award of March 1947, as announced by the *firman-i-shahi*, neither satisfied the *biswedars* nor the tenants. The *biswedars* felt that they had been mulcted of larger parts of land over which they had rightful proprietary claims, while the *muzaras* lamented that the *firman* exhibited the soft corner towards the *biswedars*, as large number of tenants were to be given two-third of the lands whereas in reality they occupied much more land, and, the *biswedars* far fewer in comparison, were to get one-third of the lands.

The leaders of the movement interpreted the latest move of the government as aimed at splitting the various sections of the tenancy by making concessions to one and ignoring the others, thereby weakening the movement.<sup>1</sup> At a meeting of the *Muzara War Council*, held shortly after the declaration of the *firman*, it was rejected.<sup>2</sup> The *muzaras* were cautioned not to come into the trap of the State, as the *firman* was a signal that the government was tottering and they had to be patient if they wanted more land and not to reach individual agreements with the *biswedars*.

In the *rabi* of 1947, once again the violence as a result of clashes between the *biswedars* and tenants mounted. Now it was the turn of the *biswedars*. They decided to take the law into their own hands, harass the *muzaras* and pressurise the government in their favour. On April 1947, Nirpal Singh *biswedars* attacked tenants of village Penjupura with the help of *goondas* and extorted rupees 4000 from them. He was the President of Zamindar Sabha of Biswedars. In Khatriwala, the *biswedars* injured two tenants and burnt their unthrashed crop. On 11 April, the *biswedars* of Kalbanjara along with twenty-five *goondas* attacked the tenants. As a result, five of the tenants died and seven others were badly wounded. On the report of *biswedars*, the police

---

\*Lecturer, History Department, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, 'Pepsu ch Muzarian da Ghol te Communist Party' in *Sangram Bhare Punjab Vareh* (Jullundur, 1976), p. 74 (Hereafter quoted as *Sangram Bhare Punjab Vareh*).

2. *Ibid.*

arrested forty tenants of village Naiwala on 24 May, under the Public Safety Ordinance. On the 3 June 1947, six *biswedars* alongwith fifteen *goondas* attacked the tenants of Qasaiwara. Two tenants were injured by the gunshots and two others by *lathi* blows. Two tenant leaders were murdered in village Munshiwala under mysterious circumstances.<sup>3</sup> In the succeeding *kharif* season, there were reports of clashes from villages Mulewala, Anupgarh, Kot Dunna, Gurthali, Beranwala, Dharamgarh, Bakshiwala and Bajewala.<sup>4</sup> This was a wholesale attempt on the part of the *biswedars* to sabotage the shahi *firman* of March, 1947.<sup>5</sup>

In this way within three months of the announcement of the *firman*, fifteen tenants were killed and forty injured. No *biswedar* or *goonda* employed by them was given deterrent punishments. On the other hand, under Public Safety Ordinance and under section 107 IPC, about 1000 tenants were put behind the bars,

At this juncture came the partition of India which took the fire out of the movement for sometime.

Dr Pattabhi Sittaramyya visited Patiala at the end of February 1948 and addressed a public meeting. In the speeches made by various Praja Mandal leaders, the plight of the *muzaras* and the atrocities perpetrated by the State authorities against them were highlighted. Appeals for early solution of the complex *biswedar-muzara* problem were made. One of the resolutions passed was :<sup>6</sup>

"This political conference views with grave concern that no step has been taken to better the lot of the *muzaras*, rather attempts were made to crush them. *Sarkar's* autocratic rule has bolstered *biswedari*, whereas what was required was termination of *biswedari*."

Teja Singh Swatantar shifted his field of activity to Patiala State by the *rabi* season of 1948. This amounted to shifting of the headquarters of the Lal Party, a splinter group of the Communist Party which he headed, to Patiala.<sup>7</sup> As by now the Communist Party was a proscribed organisation,<sup>8</sup> most of the *muzara* campaign from now

3. Jaspal Kaur, *Tenant Movement in Patiala State* (Punjabi University M. Phil., dissertation, 1967), pp. 56-57.

4. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, *Muzarian-Kissanan de Mitter Kaun* (Ms).

5. Interview with Dara Singh, former Revenue Minister of PEPSU.

6. Patiala State Records, *Ijlas-i-Khas*, File No. 2242, PSA.

7. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, *Sangram Bhare Punjab Varelh*, p. 74.

8. Vaid, Chhajju Mal and Teja Singh Swatantar in *Sangram Bhare Punjab Varelh*, p. 83.



onwards was personally directed by him from underground.<sup>9</sup>

As an immediate measure strong *Kissan Sabha* units were organised in the tenant villages. The leaders feared that the tenants might reach individual agreements with the *biswedars*. The *Kissan Sabha* units were, therefore, instructed to educate the tenants. As a result, only in 7-8 villages, the tenants reached agreements with *biswedars* on the basis of 1947 *firman*.<sup>10</sup> This tendency was soon checked. At this juncture, the Communists adopted these measures of strategy:<sup>11</sup> Capture the land ; resist evictions ; confront *biswedars goondas* : demoralise bureaucracy ; propagate the achievements, with allies from among the peasant proprietors and genuine anti-feudal elements in Praja Mandal and avoid clashes with the police.

Many volunteers were enrolled as members of *Kissan Sabhas*. Of them ten per cent choicest and most trustworthy members from *Kissan Sabha* of each village were armed. The armaments consisted of spikes, spears, sticks, swords, daggers and guns.<sup>12</sup>

The tenant struggle needed men and material in ample. The participation of peasant proprietors in the movement was a welcome addition to the strength of the *muzaras*. Jagir Singh Joga, himself a peasant proprietor, was instrumental in forging close links between the peasant proprietors and the tenants. A slogan that gained currency during those days was :<sup>13</sup>

*Muzarian di Fauj Malkan da Ration* (The army of tenants and rations of peasant proprietors)

In the earlier phase of the movement, the agricultural labourers and menials known as the *kamins* were maltreated by *muzaras*.<sup>14</sup> Now it was made incumbent upon those tenants who occupied land that as they were not paying *batai* to *biswedars* any longer, they should give

---

9. Personal Interview with Chhajju Mal Vaid.

10. *Ibid*

11. *Kissan Sabha Bhatinda, 1973, Souvenir*, p. 50.

12. Personal Interview with Chhajju Mal Vaid.

13. *Ibid*.

14. Mukherjee, Mridula, 'Peasant Movement in a Princely State of Patiala 1937-48', *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, Session XV, 1981. She says in her paper that in 1939 before the Communists had taken hold of the movement the *kamins* were maltreated.

15. Personal interview with Chhajju Mal Vaid.

a part of resources so saved to the *kamins*.<sup>15</sup> Even when the land snatched from *biswedars* was partitioned, small shares were given to the *kamins*.<sup>16</sup>

On 15 July 1948 Sardar Patel inaugurated the PEPSU which was a political union of Patiala and East Panjab States of Faridkot, Jind, Nabha, Kapurthala, Nalagarh and Kalsia.

Kishangarh had always been the storm centre of the tenant struggle. During the *kharif* season of 1948-49, Comrade Chhajju Mal Vaid along with Dharam Singh Fakkar personally supervised the 'no batai' operation.<sup>17</sup> The state authorities were determined to break the tenant resistance in this village. A police party ostensibly in search of some absconding offenders raided the village on 16 March 1949. In a crossfiring between the tenants and police, a Sub-Inspector of Police was killed and a constable injured.<sup>18</sup> This news, when flashed to the rest of the country, sent shock waves as the episode was construed as a forerunner of a widespread Communist-led agrarian revolution.<sup>19</sup> *The Tribune* wrote on 22 March 1949: "Kishangarh episode is a red signal. It shows the urgency of the problem which demands immediate solution."

On 18 March 1949, Kishangarh became a scene of full-fledged police action. A police party with two armoured cars besieged the village, and forced the villagers to surrender. In the police action that ensued six kisan activists lost their lives, which included Ram Singh Baghi. Thirty one workers including Dharam Singh Fakkar and Mohinder Singh were arrested.<sup>20</sup> In the trial that followed and attracted big press coverage, all of those arrested were acquitted in 1950.<sup>21</sup>

The movement cut fresh ground when it began to spread to villages that had hitherto kept aloof; these were Najaura, Chungar, Kahangarh, Dogal, Sakhipur and Dhandari. A new feature of this wave was that a majority of these villages were those of tenants-at-will.<sup>22</sup>

16. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, *Muzarian-Kissanan de Mitter Kaun* (Ms).

17. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, *Comrade Dharam Singh Fakkar: Ik Jeewani Ik Itihaas* (Bhatinda, 1979).

18. *The Tribune*, 22 March 1949, p. 3.

19. Raghbir Singh, the Home Minister of PEPSU in an interview with *The Tribune* on 3 April 1949 said: "To my mind the Kishangarh incident was the precursor of general lawlessness for which the communists were preparing in the border Union Province of India."

20. *The Tribune*, 23 March 1949, p. 3.

21. Vaid, Chhajju Mal, *Muzarian-Kissanan de Mitter Kaun* (Ms).

22. *Ibid.*



Five punitive police posts were set up in the intensely disturbed villages and an additional force of 2000 horse policemen was raised. A wide search for *Kissan* activists was conducted.<sup>23</sup> The tenant outbreaks at Kishangarh and other villages and the subsequent police action was highly embarrassing for the State Government. The least that the national leaders vouched for was a peasant revolution at hand so soon after independence. With this serving as a background, the Maharaja announced an ordinance for the abolition of *biswedari* on 20 April 1949.<sup>24</sup>

The abolition of *biswedari* ordinance offered division of land between *biswedars* and occupancy tenants in the ratio of 1 : 3. A tenant could purchase a *biswedari* on payment of 100 times of land revenue. This ordinance also vested occupancy rights in non-occupancy tenants.

Since the beginning of 1940s, the Praja Mandal had come to be dominated by urban Hindus, the front line leaders among whom were Brish Bhan, Harbans Lal, Des Raj and Sunder Lal. Some among these leaders, forged intimate links with the Communists.<sup>25</sup> Having little or no stakes in the countryside and with progressive outlook, they earnestly supported the *muzaras*. Their support proved to be of crucial importance and tremendous strength to the *muzaras*.

Realising the gravity of the situation, the State Minister at the centre set up a committee of three headed by C. S. Venkatachari to enquire into the land tenure system and tenancy relationships prevalent in PEPSU apart from the rights of the occupancy tenants. The committee was to suggest measures for bringing about uniform land tenures and tenancy relationships in PEPSU.<sup>26</sup>

The first general election for the PEPSU assembly in 1952 did not augur political stability in the State. Out of the 60 seated Legislative Assembly, the Congress Front led by Colonel Raghbir Singh won 29 seats, the Akalis led by Gian Singh Rarewala secured 28 seats. The Communists who had three members were a deciding factor and could have tilted the scales one way or the other. After some hard bargaining, they reached an agreement with the Congress that it would implement

23. *Ibid.*

24. *The Tribune*, 22 August 1949, p. 7.

25. During the personal interview of the writer of this paper with Sh. Brish Bhan, the latter said that he had friends among the Communists. This link was disliked by Sardar Patel and entailed some misunderstanding between the two.

26. *The Tribune*, Ambala, 12 May 1950, p. 3.

land reforms speedily and in their turn they would support the ministry. Thus, the first popular ministry headed by colonel Raghbir Singh took the oath of office. On the very first day, when the session of the newly elected Assembly opened, the ministry fell as some members defected to the other side. The Communists had also decided to part company with the Congress as the Akalis offered them the same conditions and in the selection of their candidate, the Communists were to be supported for a Punjab Assembly seat for which a bye-election was due.<sup>27</sup>

A United Front Ministry led by Gian Singh Rarewala assumed office on 23 April 1952. In May 1952, a nine member committee headed by Dara Singh was appointed to suggest remedies for the solution of *biswedari* tenant problem.<sup>28</sup> Shortly afterwards, the committee recommended a ceiling limit of 100 acres for personal cultivation of landlords, the remainder of the land was to be divided among the tenants.<sup>29</sup> By June 1952, the Venkatachari Commission, in its report also suggested a solution on similar lines.<sup>30</sup>

There was another significant political occurrence which was of some relevance to the Patiala State. By the beginning of August 1952, the Lal Party led by Teja Singh Swatantar was dissolved and its members rejoined the parent Communist Party.<sup>31</sup> Thus, ended the violent phase of the *muzara* movement.

As early as 1947, before the *firman-i-shahi*, when there were many violent clashes between the tenants and *biswedars*, many *biswedars* began to desert the villages.<sup>32</sup> After 1949, a good number of *biswedars* began to surrender gradually their proprietary claims voluntarily for instance, Joginder Singh, *biswedari* of Mal Singhwala gave up his proprietary claim over 5000 *bighas* of land.<sup>33</sup> In 1952, a tenant conference was held at Mansa, which was presided over by Jagir Singh Joga. In the presence of Dara Singh, Revenue Minister of PEPSU, *biswedars* of Talwandi Saboo, Khatriwala and Kharak Singhwala etc., surrendered their claims on about 55,000 acres of land.<sup>34</sup> Some of the *biswedars*

27. Personal interview with Brish Bhan.

28. Personal interview with Dara Singh.

29. *The Tribune*, 26 May 1952, p. 3.

30. *Ibid.*, 2 July 1952, p. 3.

31. *Ibid.*, 4 August 1952, p. 3.

32. Personal interview with Dara Singh.

33. *The Tribune*, 17 June 1952, p. 3.

34. Gupta, C.L., 'Bhatinda the Stain Centre of People's Movement' in 21st National Conference, All India Kissan Sabha Bhatinda, *Souvenir*.



openly began to side with the *muzaras*. One such *biswedat* was Sher Singh Sidhu of Gurthali.<sup>35</sup> Later, he disappeared under mysterious circumstances. It is believed by his family that he was done away with, as a result of conspiracy hatched by the *biswedars*.

In order to encourage voluntary donations of land, a *bhoodan* stint had been organised in the Patiala State since 1952. Lala Achint Ram M.P. was the convener of the local *bhoodan* organisation. In 1955, even a *bhoodan* Act was passed in the State but it made little impact. In all, 620 *bighas* of land were distributed under the aegis of *bhoodan* in Patiala.<sup>36</sup>

The new ministerial arrangement did not guarantee stability to PEPSU. The Rarewala ministry fell in March 1953. Now the President's rule was promulgated over PEPSU. P. S. Rau, I. C. S., was to be the Chief Adviser, to the Rajpramukh.<sup>37</sup> In fact he was to be the de facto executive head of PEPSU during the tenure of the President's rule.

Rau was sent with express order to curb lawlessness in PEPSU. In the leftist pockets of the State, there had been a general deterioration in law and order situation, which made it easy for the tenants to offer organised resistance even in execution of genuine rental decrees. The writ of the Government hardly ran in these areas.

Immediately after assuming office P. S. Rau visited some of the more difficult villages and plainly told the defaulters that it was in their own interest to pay up their dues, for the law was going to be enforced without regard to consequences. Revenue officers were told that the collection of the land revenue and other dues of Government was their first duty and they would be supported in lawful discharge of their duties. As a result, the non-cooperative and non-paying tendency of the defaulters gradually broke down and the standing arrears began to be cleared village by village.<sup>38</sup>

The sensitive land problem was also taken up in all earnestness by P. S. Rau. Three acts dealing with the tenures and tenancy problem in PEPSU were passed. The first was the Abolition of *Ala Malkiat* Act,

35. Personal Interview with Jagir Singh Joga.

36. Information by Courtesy, Shri Jagan Nath Sharma, President Punjab Bhoodan Board.

37. On the formation of PEPSU, the ruling Maharaja of Patiala, Yadavinder Singh was nominated the Rajpramukh of the Union, an appointment similar to present governors of Indian States.

38. *President's Rule in PEPSU*, published by Authority (Patiala, 1954), pp. 34-35.

which set right certain anomalies in land laws of PEPSU other than Patiala.<sup>39</sup>

The second was the PEPSU Occupancy Tenants (vesting of proprietary rights) Act, 1953 by which occupancy tenants automatically became full proprietors over an area of three lakh acres. On the date the Act was brought into force, compensation payable was settled at twelve times the annual rent. The maximum rent payable was fixed at twice the land revenue in case of holdings paying *batai* for purposes of determining compensation.<sup>40</sup>

The third Act, viz., the PEPSU Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act, 1953, was by far the most important of the three. It aimed at raising as many tenants-at-will as possible to the status of full proprietors. The permissible limit for personal cultivation was fixed at one half of the area owned by land-owners, subject to maximum of 30 standard acres and subject to a minimum of 10 standard acres. Land owners were allowed to eject the tenants upto the permissible limit but for personal cultivation only. In rest of the area, the tenants could not be evicted so long as they continued to pay their rents. In addition, they had been given the option to buy the land under their occupancy on payment in six yearly instalments of the compensation at 90 times the land revenue which seldom or never exceeded the annual rent that was being paid by them.

The popular ministry in PEPSU was restored in March 1954. The Congress won a thumping majority in the elections to PEPSU Assembly. The Congress ministry was headed by Colonel Raghbir Singh, who died before the turn of the year. He was succeeded by Brish Bhan as the Chief Minister.

In 1955, before the merger of PEPSU with the Punjab, new PEPSU *Ala Malkiat* Abolition, Occupancy Tenants and Tenancy and Agricultural lands Acts were passed by the PEPSU Assembly. Except for minor alterations, in matters of detail, these acts were on the lines of the earlier President's Acts. The duplication was necessitated by the fact that the land was a state subject, therefore, all laws pertaining to land had to be passed by the State Assembly.

Thus in this period, five governments, two enquiry commissions and three acts were required to solve the inveterate tenant problem of the Union.

---

39. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 45.



## Preservation of Historical Records

Naginder Singh\*

The excavations at ancient sites have brought to knowledge that the burnt clay bricks, wax tablets, papyrus scrolls and vellum materials were successively used for writing and record. In ancient India, the centres of learning were called *mathas* or monastries. Nalanda and Taxila were known as seats of learning and records. The advent of *Bhoj Patra* and 'palm leaves' with mini-scul writings multiplied Archival repositories.

Previously the causes of decay of records were examined by naked eyes and manuscripts were dehumidified in a mild sunlight and the leaves of 'neem' etc. were applied as insecticides. With the advent of paper, the number of public and private libraries increased as multiplication of documents became cheaper.

The hand-made paper had fair components to fight decay. The library of Akbar, the Great Mughal, was known for stocks of 20,000 manuscripts, etc. The rodents and termites effectively destroyed records till modern scientific inventions. The preservation of all cultural heritage brought forward effective conservation programmes for reappraisal of history by the scholarly successors. The number of libraries and archives further increased with the invention of printing and research facilities. The problem of maintenance and preservation has taken alarming proportions due to increase in hand-written, typed and printed records.

Since 19th century, the institutional records of judicial courts, governments departments, legislatures, revenue records, initially are maintained in respective repositories. The National or State Archives properly appraise, prepare reference media and preserve the records on scientific lines. As the diversion of funds is not proportionate to the needs of scientific operations on the records which pile up yearly, the records have to be left to the fate of facilities procured. In view of lack of space, the storage is not according to established inventories or classifications which in turn tells upon the course of

---

\* Assistant Editor, Punjab State Archives, Patiala.

research and non-availability of technicians and chemicals leave below the standards of preservation and thus we are silent spectators to check the vagaries of decay.

Other source material of historical records is with individual families which naturally is not equally cared after as in the national repositories. By and large, the families, due to traditional outlook or progenitorial affections or natural urge for rare collections, are unwilling to part with the material. Secondly, the archives or academics lack publicity to inspire a confidence for proper upkeep thereof or they are displeased with rules-ridden access thereto. The mandatory reprographic course can save the socio-economic and cultural adjuncts of history and records lying in private custody. This measure will make retrieval of scholarly notes much facilitated without problems of storage in archives or universities.

The wood-based paper in use now-a-days cannot sustain as successfully attacks of insects, dust, dampness, etc. as hand-made paper used to be. The enemies work silently and are difficult to eradicate fully except by costly fumigation chambers. The humid climate affects the strength of paper components due to dilation and excessive dry atmosphere makes it fragile and dust exercises effects of salt for early deterioration of records.

The large repositories are in big cities and the air keeps sulphurous gases and also the dirt and dampness provoke chemical and biological reactions on records. For dehumidification, the natural light and artificial light in intensity by ultra-violet rays and infra red rays, invisible to eye discolours and embrittles the papers.

In the Laboratory, the character of decaying specimen is delineated by the scientific techniques with the help of lens. Now a days the x-rays and gama rays are used to dispense with the paper enemies. As such, a technically qualified person can preserve, restore and conserve the historical records and control the humidity, atmospheric pollution and light in stack-rooms. The change in climate, as in India, affects the records organically and inorganically. The latest devices are the use of humidifiers and dehumidifiers to control the relative humidity in the stack area.

The radiation complex system is a very costly apparatus and as such is beyond the means of most of the repositories and in the alternative the fumigation chamber, either made of wood, steel or brick-vault, is used to eliminate the paper insects.



To secure the cultural heritage, the scars left by insects, termites, white ants, etc. are healed by the technicians through scientific study of causes, nature, composition, structure and other reasons of decay. The records are of two kinds—hand-written or printed with dissoluble ink or indissoluble ink. The former is chemically washed and acetone/acetate foil is used for preservation with Japanese tissue paper or with chiffoining, and the latter is also chemically washed with dextrine mixture or other first class adhesive is applied and secured in Norway-made tissue paper and rehabilitated in bound volumes.

The decay in the life of our socio-cultural history can hardly be arrested completely but through scientific protective means it can be delayed. Hence the xerox, word process or microfilm copies thereof are made use of by incoming academicians and the original records are retired to sound show-cases for affording a peep into the glimpses of the past to the indulgent onlookers.

The research and development wing improves the techniques of preservation and its establishment is a most costly theorem in public and private sectors for many record repositories. Therefore, in the alternative, the regional research and development centres are established to conduct research in the fields of restoration and conservation techniques, paper technology, storage conditions, deacidification, microfilm, tapes. etc. and in turn such centres shall enable the constituent or associating units to keep abreast of new techniques and methods of preserving the historical records for the coming generations.

## ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ

ਰਾਏ ਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ\*

ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ (1606-1644 ਈ:) ਦੇ ਸਮਕਾਲੀ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਾਫੀ ਸਮੱਗਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸਮੱਗਰੀ ਦੇ ਮਹੱਤਵ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਕਾਫੀ ਪਤਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਹਤਰ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਰਚਾ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਸਮਝੀ ਹੈ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਦੀ ਉੱਤਰਅਧਿਕਾਰਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਸਿੱਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਗੱਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਪਹਿਲਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਉਹੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰਬਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਨਿਯੁਕਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਦੂਜਾ, ਯੋਗ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਤੀਜਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਚ ਪੂਰਬਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਰੂਪ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਚੌਥਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਚ ਦੈਵੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਉੱਤਰਅਧਿਕਾਰਤਾ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਧਾਂਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਵੀਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਪੰਜ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੀ ਲੜੀ ਦਾ ਅਟੁੱਟ ਅੰਗ ਦਰਸਾਇਆ ਹੈ।<sup>1</sup> ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਕਾਇਆ ਪਲਟ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ।<sup>2</sup> ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਈ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਰੂਪ ਸਨ।<sup>3</sup>

ਗੁਰੂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਵੱਡੀ ਸਮੱਸਿਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਸਤਰਬੱਧ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਨੀਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਤਤਕਾਲੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਸ਼ੰਕਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਬਾਰੇ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸ਼ੰਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਮੀਣਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਣ।

ਉਹ ਸ਼ੰਕੇ ਨਿਮਨ ਲਿਖਤ ਹਨ :

ਪਹਿਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਟਿਕ ਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੈਠੇ।

\* ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।

1. ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 1962), ਪੰਨੇ 24, 25.

2. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 1, 48.

3. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 13, 24, 26.



ਪਹਿਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਪਾਸ ਮੁਲਕ ਦੇ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਸਨ, ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੇ ਕਿਲ੍ਹੇ ਵਿਚ ਕੈਦ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਡਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਨੀਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਰੁੱਝੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ।

ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਪਹਿਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਕਥਨ ਤੇ ਗਾਇਨ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਰੂਪੀ ਲੁਟੇਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਲਾ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ।<sup>4</sup>

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਸੰਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਸਸਤਰਬੱਧ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਨੀਤੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਅਮਲ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਦੀ ਵਿਧੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੱਧ-ਕਲਾ ਦੀ ਸਿਖਲਾਈ ਦਿੱਤੀ।

ਇਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸੰਕਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਧਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਉਦਾਹਰਣ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਨੀਤੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸੀ।<sup>5</sup> ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ੰਕੇ ਤਿਆਗ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਨਵੀਂ ਨੀਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਦਾ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਉਂ, ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਨੀਤੀ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਾਸਤਵਿਕਤਾ ਸਮਝ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਅਦਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੰਕਲਪਾਂ ਦਾ ਉਲੇਖ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰ ਲੈਣੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਸਾਧਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਰਹਿਨੁਮਾ ਹੈ।<sup>6</sup> ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ, ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਕੱਚਾ ਗੁਰੂ, ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਆਪਸੀ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਏ ਹਨ।<sup>7</sup> ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਵਿਹਾਰਕ ਸਮੱਸਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਲੇ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਵਿਚਾਰਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਛੁੱਟ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸੰਗਤ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਾਫੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ, ਬਣਤਰ, ਸੰਗਠਨ ਤੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਪਾਈ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਤਿ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਤੇ ਕੁਸੰਗ ਦੇ ਤਿਆਗ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਤਿ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਦਗੁਣ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਸੰਗਤ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਮਿਲਾਪ ਦਾ ਸਾਧਨ ਹੈ।<sup>8</sup> ਇਸ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਅਦਾਰੇ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।<sup>9</sup>

4. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨਾ 26.

5. ਉਹੀ

6. ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ 1276.

7. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 304, 442, 982.

8. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 1244, 1297.

9. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 976, 1297, 1316.

ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦੇ ਕਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਬਲ, ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ, ਆਗਰਾ, ਆਲਮਗੀਰ (ਪਟਨਾ) ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਲਖਨਊ, ਪ੍ਰਯਾਗ, ਜੇਨਪੁਰ, ਪਟਨਾ, ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਗਵਾਲੀਅਰ, ਉਜੇਨ, ਬੁਰਹਾਨਪੁਰ ਤੇ ਢਾਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਕਾਇਮ ਹੋ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ।<sup>10</sup> ਇਉਂ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਲੱਗਭੱਗ ਸਾਰੇ ਉੱਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀਆਂ 'ਵਾਰਾਂ' ਵਿਚ ਕੁੱਝ ਸਮਕਾਲੀ ਤਤਕਾਲੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਵੀ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕਈਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਜਾਤਾਂ-ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ।<sup>11</sup> ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੇ ਕਿੰਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਰਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਕੀਤੀ। ਜ਼ਿਲਾਦਾਤਰ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਣੇ ਸਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਤਰਖਾਣ, ਮਾਛੀ, ਛੀਂਬੇ ਘੁਮਿਆਰ, ਸੁਨਿਆਰ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਘੇਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ।

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਤਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਵੈਦ, ਚੌਧਰੀ, ਜਰਾਹ, ਸ਼ਾਹੂਕਾਰ, ਪਾਂਧੇ, ਲੁਹਾਰ, ਤਰਖਾਣ, ਨਾਈ, ਸਰਾਫ਼, ਸੁਨਿਆਰੇ, ਸੈਨਿਕ ਤੇ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਸਨ।<sup>12</sup>

ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ ਤੇ ਬਣਤਰ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਸੰਗਠਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਮਸੰਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਮਸੰਦ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਨ।<sup>13</sup> ਪਰ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਉਲੇਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਬਾਰੇ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਤੇ ਗਾਇਨ, ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਉਤਾਰੇ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ, ਗੋਸ਼ਟੀਆਂ, ਗੁਰਪੁਰਬ ਮਨਾਉਣੇ ਆਦਿ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ।<sup>14</sup> ਨਵੇਂ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਚਰਨ-ਪਾਹੁਲ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ।<sup>15</sup>

ਅਜਿਹੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਮੰਤਵ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦੱਸਣਾ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੀਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਵਰਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਇਹ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਸੰਗਠਤ ਸਨ। ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਨੂੰ ਚੰਗਾ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਦੇ ਜਤਨ ਵੀ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੋਣਾ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪੱਕਿਆਂ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ (1606 ਈ:) ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਬਾਬਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀ ਚੰਦ ਨੇ ਛੇਵਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕੀਤਾ।<sup>16</sup> ਉਸ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਬਾਬਾ ਮਿਹਰਬਾਨ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ। ਉਸਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਇਮ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ। ਖਡੂਰ ਤੇ ਗੋਇੰਦਵਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਵਸ ਰਹੇ

10. ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਪੰਨੇ 11, 18, 31.

11. ਉਹੀ

12. ਉਹੀ

13. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨੇ 11, 22.

14. ਉਹੀ, ਪੰਨਾ 4.

15. ਉਹੀ

16. 'ਦਬਿਸਤਾਨਿ-ਮਜ਼ਹਬ' ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀਏ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਛੇਵਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਵੇਖੋ, ਮਾਖੜ ਦੇ ਤਵਾਰੀਖ਼ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ, ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, 1949), ਪੰਨਾ 73.



ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਵੱਲ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਥਤੀ ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਲੱਖਣ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੋਈ ਵੀ ਵੱਖ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਨਿਖੇੜ ਔਖੀ ਖੇਡ ਸੀ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ 36ਵੀਂ ਵਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਦੇ ਕੁੱਝ ਪੱਖਾਂ ਵੱਲ ਧਿਆਨ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਮੀਣੇ ਕਪਟੀ ਸਨ। ਉਹ ਸੱਚੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਮੁਕਾਬਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਸਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਖਵਾਉਣਾ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਜ ਪਰਜਾ ਖੇਡ ਵਾਂਗ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਸਿੰਬਲ ਦੇ ਰੁੱਖ ਵਾਂਗ ਗੁਣਹੀਨ ਸਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਨਮਤੀ ਤੇ ਕਰਮਕਾਂਡੀ ਸਾਧਨਾ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ। ਉਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਆਪਾ ਜਤਾਉਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਥੋਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਦੁਕਵੇਂ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਦੀ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਸੰਗਤ ਆਦਿ ਸੰਸਾਥਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਮੀਣਾ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਦਾ ਮੁਕਾਬਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਉਘਾੜਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਹਮਾਇਤ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਥੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਮੱਹਤਵਪੂਰਣ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ—ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਸੰਗਤ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਕਾਫੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਤਨ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਸਹੀ ਪੱਖ ਰੱਖੇ ਜਾਣ।

## ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਤਾ ਨਰਿਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਗੀ\*

ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਉਪਰ ਭਾਰਤ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸੱਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਸਰੋਤ ਹਨ। ਆਧੁਨਿਕ ਯੁੱਗ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਖੋਜ ਦੇ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ, ਬਾਕੀ ਸਭ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਸੁੱਟ ਦੇਵੇ ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਆਮ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਚਮਤਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਐਵੇਂ ਹੀ ਅਣਗੌਲਿਆਂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਚਮਤਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਖੋਜ ਕਲਾ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਥਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ, ਪਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਖਾਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਪੱਖ ਲੁਕਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਸੂਝ-ਬੂਝ ਨਾਲ ਕਾਫੀ ਕੁਝ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਚਮਤਕਾਰ, ਆਮ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪੀਰਾਂ ਪੈਗੰਬਰਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਹਸਤੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਸੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਨੇਤਾ ਦੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਕਾਰਨਾਮਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਮ ਲੋਕੀਂ ਚਮਤਕਾਰ ਕਹਿ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਨੇਤਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਬਾਤੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਅਤੇ ਲਗਾਉ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਰ-ਬਾਰ ਚਮਤਕਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜਾ, ਹਰ ਘਟਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ, ਇਸਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿਕਤਾ ਸ਼ੱਕਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਬਹੁਤ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਵਧਕੇ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਾਰਤਕ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਉਤਮ ਨਮੂਨਾ ਹਨ।

(ਸੰਪਾਦਕ)

\*ਡਿਫੇਂਸ ਸੱਟਡੀਓ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ



## ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੇ ਰਚਨ-ਕਾਲ

ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ\*

‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਇਕ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਰਚਨਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਬੀਤੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਜਿਤਨੀਆਂ ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਹਨ, ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਵਧ ਰੋਚਿਕ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਵਾਕ ਹਨ। ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦਾ ਸੰਮੇਲਨ ਹੈ, ਸਾਹਿਤਕ ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਗੱਦ ਪਦ ਦਾ ਮਿਸ਼੍ਰਣ ਅਤੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਇਸਨੇ ਭੂਤ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਕੁਝ ਸੱਜਣ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਰਚਨਾ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਪੋਥੀ, ਉਸ ਵੱਡੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪੰਜ ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਭਾਗ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਭਾਈ ਰਾਮ ਕੁਇਰ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਲਿਖਵਾਇਆ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਪੂਰਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਉਹ ‘ਪੰਜ ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਵਾਲੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦਾ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਉਨ੍ਹੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜਕਾਲ ਦੀ ਪੈਦਾਵਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਹ ਮਹਾਂਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਹੋ ਬੀਤੀਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਕਥਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਇਤਨੀ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਖਰੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਰਾਮ ਕੁਇਰ (1672-1761 ਈ :) ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ। ਹਾਂ, ਚਤੁਰ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਉਤਮ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਰਾਮ ਕੁਇਰ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਉੱਤਰ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਕਈ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਵਾਕ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਦਰਸਾਏ ਹਨ। ਇਹੋ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਵਾਕ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦੀ ਜਿੰਦਜਾਨ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਹੋ ਇਸ ਪੋਥੀ ਦੀ ਤਬਾਹੀ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਣ ਬਣੇ ਤੇ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਬਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਮ ਲਿਆ।

ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦਾ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਹਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ :-

ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਸਰਨ ਤੁਹਿ, ਲਿਖੇ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਗੁਰ ਅਨੁਚਰ ਬੁੱਢੇ ਕੁਲਨ, ਰਾਮ ਕੁੰਵਰ ਸੁਖ ਪੰਥ । 3 ।

ਰਹੈ ਹਜੂਤ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ, ਕਰੇ ਉਕਤਿ ਜੋ ਵਾਕ

ਗੁਰ ਰਤਨਮਾਲ ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖੇ, ਜਿਉਂ ਗੁਰ ਕੀਨੇ ਵਾਕ । 4 ।

ਇਹ ਵੀ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਪੰਜ ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦੇ ਲਿਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਸ ਵੱਡੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਵੱਖ ਕਰਕੇ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਪੋਥੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਗਈ ਤਾਂ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ 15-20 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਨਵੀਆਂ ਪਾਈਆਂ

\* ਕਲਮ ਮੰਦਰ, ਛੋਅਰ ਮਾਲ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ।

ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਸ ਐਡੀਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਮਥਰਾਦਾਸ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੀ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੁਢਲੇ ਦੋ ਪੈਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਉਸਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ :-

ਗੁਰ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਮਥਰਾ ਬਿਪ੍ਰ ਹਾਥ ਜੋੜਿ ਕਹਯੋ ਏਹੁ । 9 ।

ਫਿਰ 17 ਨੰ: ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਟੂਕ ਹੈ :-

ਮਥਰਾ ਮਿਸਰ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿਉਂ ਸਿਖ । ਦੇਖੇ ਹਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਢਿਗ ਹੀ ਲਿਖ ।

88 ਨੰ: ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਫਿਰ ਇਹੋ ਨਾਮ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ :-

ਸ੍ਰਾਸ ਠਹਿਰਾਵੇ ਨਾਭਿ ਘਰ, ਉਠੈ ਤਰੰਗੀ ਓਜ

ਨਾਮ ਭਜਨ ਕੀ ਜੁਗਿਤ ਇਹ, ਮਥਰਾ ਬਖਸ਼ੀ ਮੌਜ ।

ਇਹ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਪਾਠਕ ‘ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਖਰੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੀ ਨਾ ਸਮਝੇ, ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਧੇ ਘਾਟੇ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਥਾਨੇਸਰ ਵਾਸੀ ਇਹ ਮੈਣ ਦੁਆਬੀਆ ਮਥਰਾਦਾਸ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਹੀ ਹੈ।

‘ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ, ਪੰਜਾਹਵੀਂ ਤੇ ਅੰਤਲੀ ਸੌਂਵੀਂ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ 1791 ਬਿ: ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ 1781 ਬਿ: ਸੰਮਤ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਕਈ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਰਚਨਾ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਹੈ। ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ, ‘ਪੰਜ ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਸੰਪੂਰਣ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਇਹੋ ਸਾਲ ਹੋਵੇ ਲੇਕਿਨ ‘ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦੇ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਕਾਲ ਦਾ ਮੰਨ ਸਕਣਾ ਸੰਭਵ ਨਹੀਂ; ਨਾਲੇ ਇਹ ‘ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਕੇਵਲ ਵੱਡੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੱਢਿਆ ਇਕ ਭਾਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਧਾਈ ਘਟਾਈ ਇਕ ਨਵੀਂ ਪੋਥੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਜੂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਈ। ਇਸਦੇ ਲਈ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਦੂਡਣ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ। ‘ਸੌ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੰਦਰਲੀਆਂ ਗਵਾਹੀਆਂ ਦਸਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਬਾਦ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਹੈ, 1791 ਬਿ: ਜਾਂ 1734 ਈ: ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।

**ਅੰਦਰਲੀਆਂ ਗਵਾਹੀਆਂ**

ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰ: 57 ਵਿਚ ਨਾਦਰਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਗਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੈਭੀਤ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਚਰਚਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹਮਲਾ 1796 ਬਿ: (1739) ਵਿਚ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ, ਇਸਨੂੰ 1791 ਬਿ: ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ :-

ਮਾਰੇ ਮਰੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਦਿਨ ਬੀਤੇ । ਆਵਾ ਨਾਦਰ ਮੁਗਲੋਂ ਭੀਤੇ

ਤਾਂ ਪਾਛੇ ਸੁੰਵੀ ਭੂ ਹੋਈ । ਮਾਲਕ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਦਿਖੈ ਨ ਕੋਈ । 14

ਸਾਖੀ 15 ਵਿਚ ਪਠਾਣੀ ਹਮਲਿਆਂ ਵੱਲ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੈ ਤੇ 100 ਨੰ: ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਅਹਿਮਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਅਬਦਾਲੀ ਦੇ ਆਉਣ ਦਾ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਉਲੇਖ ਹੈ :

ਅਹਿਮਦ ਆਯਾ ਕਾਬਲੀ, ਗਏ ਲੋਗ ਸਭ ਸੈਲ ।

57 ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਫਤਿਹ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੈ :

ਏਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਚਹੂ ਦਿਸਿ ਝੂਲੇ

ਪਸ਼ਚਮ ਅਕਟ ਪਾਰ ਲੜ ਕੂਲੇ ।

64 ਨੰ: ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਕਸੂਰ ਜਿੱਤਣ ਵੱਲ ਸਾਫ਼ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਉਸ 1807 ਈ: ਵਿਚ ਫਤਿਹ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ :-

ਸਿਖ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਹੋਇਗੇ, ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਹੋਇਗਾ ਰਾਜ

ਤਾਂ ਪੀਛੇ ਇਕ ਸਿਖ ਮਮ, ਧਰੈ ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਲਾਜ । 9 ।



ਮਾਰੈਗਾ ਕੁਸ ਨਗਰ ਕੇ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਜਿਤ ਬਡ ਤੇਜ

ਤਾਕੇ ਪੀਛੈ ਜੁਧ ਹੋਇ, ਘਰ ਘਰਿ ਲੜੈ ਨਰੇਸ । 10

17 ਨੰ: ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਕੇਸਵਦਾਸ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਯੱਗ ਕਰਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਦੌੜ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਪੁਛਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਕਿਧਰ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਜਵਾਬ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਨਮੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਰਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਰਖ ਕੇ ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ।

ਬਿਪ੍ਰ ਕਹਾ ਇਹ ਗਯੋ ਪਲਾਈ । ਬੋਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਇਨ ਦੇਹੀ ਪਾਈ

ਹਮਰੇ ਸਿਖ ਹੁਇ ਅਵਤਰੈ । ਰਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਭੂਮਿ ਪਰ ਧਰੈ ।

ਜਾਹਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਚਤੁਰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਡਹੋਰੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਕੇਸਵਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਗੱਲ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਤੇਜ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਕਹੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ।

ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਬਸ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰ: 83 ਦਸਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਿਸ਼ੰਭਰ ਦਾਸ ਉਜੈਨੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੋ ਪਤਨੀਆਂ-ਮਦਨਵੰਤੀ ਤੇ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਆਈਆਂ । ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਮਦਨਵੰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਮਹਲੀਂ ਵਸੇਗੀ । ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਪਾਠਕ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਜੈ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਨ੍ਹਈਏ ਦਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਘਰ ਵਾਲੀ ਰਾਣੀ ਸਦਾ ਕੌਰ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੌਰ ਦੀ ਧੀ ਮਹਿਤਾਬ ਕੌਰ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ । ਚਤੁਰ ਲੇਖਕ ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਾਣੀ ਸਦਾ ਕੌਰ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਵਰਦਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਪਦਵੀ ਤੇ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਸੀ ।

ਇਸ 83 ਨੰਬਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਸੁਆਣੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਰਜਵਲਾ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਚਰਨ ਛੁਹੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ 'ਇਹ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀ ਵੇਸਵਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਪਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿਦਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਮਾਣ ਪਾਵੇਗੀ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਸਵ ਦਾਸ—ਰਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਗੀਕਾਰ ਕਰੇਗਾ ।'

ਇਹ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਮੌਰਾਂ ਕੰਜਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਲੋਂ ਮਹਲੀਂ ਪਾਉਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੈ । ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਨੇ 1802 ਈਸਵੀ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਰਾਂ ਲਿਆਂਦੀ ਸੀ ਤੇ 1832 ਵਿਚ ਬੇਗਮ ਗੁਲਬਹਾਰ । ਇਸ ਘਾੜਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਠਕ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਰਾਜ-ਭਗਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਤਿਖਾਰੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਦੇ ਬਚਾਉ ਲਈ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਕਹਿ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਵਰਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਐਸੇ ਵਰਦਾਨ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਲੋੜ ਸੀ ।

ਫਕੀਰ ਅਜ਼ੀਜ਼-ਉਦ-ਦੀਨ, ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਦਾ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ, ਬੜਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਸੀ, । ਇਸ ਨੇ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਠਾਣਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝੌਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਬੜੀ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਸੀ । ਇਹ 1822 ਈ: ਤੇ ਫਿਰ 1835 ਵਿਚ ਪਿਸ਼ਾਵਰ ਦੇ ਸਰਹੱਦੀ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵੱਲ ਦੋਸਤ ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਸਫਲ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ,

ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰ: 82 ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੈ :-

ਤੁਰਕ ਚਾਕਰਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਬਾਲਾ । ਜੀਤੇ ਪਸ਼ਚਮ ਮਮ ਹੁਇ ਚਾਲਾ ।

ਸੋਵੀਂ ਸਾਖੀ ਮਿਸਰ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਦੱਸੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ । ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਡੋਗਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਡਾਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਸ਼ਮੇਸ਼ ਜੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਵਰਦਾਨ ਮਿਲਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਹੈ । ਰਤਨ ਦੇਉ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿਲੂਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਦੋਹਤਮਾਨ ਦੱਸ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਰ੍ਹਦਾ ਤੇ ਸੱਤ ਸਾਲ ਚਰਣ ਸ਼ਰਣ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਦਸਿਆ ਹੈ । ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰੋਪਾਉ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਸਤਰ ਬਸਤਰ ਪਹਿਨਾਉਂਦੇ

ਤੇ ਵਰ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਤਰੇ ਬੰਸ ਵਿਚ ਆਵਾਂਗਾ ਤੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰਾਂਗਾ ।

ਰੰਤਨ ਕਹਾ ਗੁਰਜੀ ਕਹੋਂ ਤੋਹਿ । ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਗੋਦਿ ਬਿਠਾਯੋ ਮੋਹਿ

ਬੋਲੇ—ਐਸਾ ਸਮਾ ਇਕ ਆਵੇ । ਹਮ ਤੁਮ ਸਭ ਮਿਲ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵੇਂ ।

ਜਦ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੀ ਫੋਲਾਫਾਲੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਪਤਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਦੇਉ ਜੰਮੂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਸ਼ਾਲੀ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ, ਜੋ 1730 ਤੋਂ 1794 ਈ: ਤੱਕ ਰਿਹਾ । ਮੁਗਲ ਇਹ ਬਰਦਾਸ਼ਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਇਤਨਾ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਤੇ ਬਲਵਾਨ ਹੋਵੇ । ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਖਾਨ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੂਬਾ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਜੰਮੂ ਤੇ ਫੋਜਕਸ਼ੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇ । ਉਸ ਨੇ ਫੋਜ ਚਾੜ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਦੇਉ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਲਿਆਂਦਾ । ਫਿਰ ਆਦੀਨਾ ਬੇਗ ਹਾਕਮ ਜਲੰਧਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਤੇ ਦੋ ਲੱਖ ਲੈਣਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਗਿਆ । ਫਕੀਰ ਅਜ਼ੀਜ਼-ਉਦ-ਦੀਨ ਦਾ ਵਡਾਰੂ ਹਕੀਮ ਖੁਦਾ ਬਖਸ਼ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡਣ ਆਇਆ ਤੇ ਇਕ ਲੱਖ ਨਕਦ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਮੁੜਿਆ । ਸੋਵੀਂ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਸੇ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਹੈ :-

ਜੰਬੂ ਭੂਪਤਿ ਬਾਧਾ ਲਾਹੌਰ । ਸੋਈ ਛੁਡਾਵਾ ਨੈਣੇ ਭੋਰ ।

ਕਈ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਸਤਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਰਾਜਾ ਗੁਲਾਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦਾ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਮਾਮਲਾ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਭੇਜ ਰਿਹਾ । ਆਖਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੋਜ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਲਿਆਈ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਖਿਆਲ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਹਵਾਲਾ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਦੇਵ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਢੁਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਫੋਜਦਾਰ ਰੰਤਨ ਦੇਉ ਸੀ । ਡੋਗਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਸਾਖੀ ਘੜ ਕੇ ਪਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਇਤਨਾ ਹੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਤੋਂ ਵਰੋਸਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ ।

ਨੌਵੀਂ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਗਤ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਹੈ । ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ਮਾਨੇ ਇਕ ਸੰਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੈਣ, ਦੁਆਬ ਦਾ ਮੋਹਰੀ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਧਾਨੀ ਅੰਬਾਲਾ ਸੀ । ਦੂਜਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੰਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ (1810-1834) ਫਤਿਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਤੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਭਾਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਲੀਏ ਜੀਂਦ ਦਾ ਪੋਤਾ ਸੀ । ਇਹ ਸੰਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੋਹਣਾ ਤੇ ਸ਼ੁਕੀਨ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਸਨੇ ਦੋ ਤਿੰਨ ਸ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਸਨ । ਸਾਖੀਕਾਰ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੁੰਮਣ ਖੇੜੇ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਤ੍ਰਿਮਤ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ :-

ਤੂੰ ਸੰਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੀ ਮਹਲ ਬਸ ਕੇ ਉਧਰੇਗੀ ।

ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਹ ਇਸੇ ਵੱਲ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੋਵੇ ।

ਇਸ ਸਾਖੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਵਿਚ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਕਈ ਥਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਹੈ । ਕਈਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਖਿਆਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਧ ਰਾਜਾ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੱਲ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕਈ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਖਰੀ ਸ਼ਹਿਜ਼ਾਦੇ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਸੀ ।

ਸਿੰਘ ਬੇਗ ਹੁਇ ਸੈਨਾ ਸਾਖੀ । ਦਿਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਜ ਪੇਲੇ ਹਾਥੀ ।

(ਸਾਖੀ 15)

ਜਾਂ ਦਿਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਇਗਾ, ਵਿਕ੍ਰਮੀ ਵਰਖ 1899 ਵਰਤੇਗਾ ।

(ਸਾਖੀ 37)

ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਲੋਕ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਨੂੰ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ । ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਸਟੇਟ ਆਰਕਾਇਵਜ਼ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਏ ਖਰੜੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਹੋ ਨਾਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ।



ਦੀਵਾਨ ਮੂਲਰਾਜ ਮੁਲਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਹਾਕਮ ਸੀ। ਜਦੋਂ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਰਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਰੇਰਨਾ ਨਾਲ ਆਕੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਰੈਲ 1848 ਤੋਂ ਜਨਵਰੀ 1849 ਤੱਕ ਲੜਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਉਹ ਆਖਰ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਸੁਟਣ ਤੇ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋਇਆ। ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਸ਼ ਨਿਕਾਲੇ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। 57 ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਸੇ ਵੱਲ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਮੂਲਾ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਏਕ ਸਹਾਈ ਤੁਲਹੜਾ, ਮੂਲਾ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਿਖ

ਭੇਸ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਿਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ, ਦੇਸ 'ਨ ਜੀਤੈ ਪਿਖ।

‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਥਾਈਂ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ ਚਰਚਾ ਗੁਰਿੰਡ, ਫਿਰੰਗੀ ਜਾਂ ਮੌਨ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਕੂਟਨੀਤੀ ਦੀ ਨਿਖੇਧੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ 1809 ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਲੁਧਿਆਣੇ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਪਾਈ ਤੇ 1849 ਵਿਚ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਹੋਇਆ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੁਖੀ ਹੋਏ:-

ਮੇਰੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਿਖ ਦੁਖ ਪਾਵਾਂ। ਤਬੈ ਫਿਰੰਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਜਾ ਦੁਖਾਵਾਂ

ਰਾਜ ਰੀਤਿ ਅਪੰਥ ਨਿਵਾਰੈ। ਤਾਂ ਦਿਨ ਐਸੀ ਕਲਾਸਵਾਰੈ।

ਬੇਚ ਦੇਸ ਕਰ ਜਾਹਿ ਫਿਰੰਗੀ। ਗਾਜੈਂਗੇ ਤਬ ਮੋਰ ਭੁਜੰਗੀ।

(ਸਾਖੀ 82)

ਜਾਂ

ਮਾਰ ਕੂਟ ਪੂਰਬ ਤੇ ਆਵੈ। ਸੈਨ ਪਿਆਦੀ ਈਸੇ ਪਾਵੈ

ਫਿਰੈ ਫਿਰੰਗੀ ਸਿੰਘਨ ਪੰਥ। ਧਸੈਂ ਆਇ ਪ੍ਰਜਾ ਸਿਉਂ ਸੰਥਿ।

(ਸਾਖੀ 60)

ਇਸ ਸਾਰੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਤਰਕ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਜਿਤਨੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਫਿਰੰਗੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਇਹ ਸਿਧ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਪੋਥੀ ਇਸ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਹੀ ਵਜੂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਈ।

ਸਾਖੀ ਨੰ: 72 ਵਿਚ ‘ਬੋਤਲ’ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਬੋਤਲ ਆਈ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਦੇ ਬਰਤਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ, ਜਾਮ, ਪਿਆਲਾ ਆਦਿ ਪਦ ਹੀ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਇਹ ਜਾਂ ਅਜੇਹੀਆਂ ਹੋਰ ਅੰਦਰਲੀਆਂ ਗਵਾਹੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਧ ਹੈ ਕਿ, ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਦਾ ਰਚਨ-ਕਾਲ ਉਨੀਂਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਹੀ ਹੈ, 18ਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੈਸਾ ਕਿ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਹ ਸਾਖੀ ਪੋਥੀ 1840 ਈ: ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਲਿਖੀ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ 1893, 94, 95 ਬਿ: ਦੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਰੜਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ 1836-37 ਈ: ਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਜੇਹਾ ਮੰਨਣ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਦੇ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਅੰਦਰ ਕੁਝ ਪਰਿਵਰਤਨ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਰਹੇ।

ਸਾਰੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਟਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਿਰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਹੁਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਖਰੜਾ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ‘ਪੰਜ ਸੋ ਸਾਖੀ’ ਨਾਮੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਵਿਚੋਂ 70-80 ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਫਿਰ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ 15-20 ਭਵਿਖਤ

ਵਾਕਾਂ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਰਲਾ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਸੇ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਖਰੜਾ ਉਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਚੌਥੇ ਦਹਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਥਾਨੇਸਰ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਮਥਰਾਦਾਸ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੀ ।

ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਤੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਨਿਹੰਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ । ਉਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਨਾਮ-ਧਾਰੀ ਵੀਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ 'ਸੇ ਸਾਖੀ' ਦਾ ਚਰਚਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ । ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਵਾਕਾਂ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਖਾਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀ ਟੇਕ ਬਖਸ਼ਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ ।





## LIST OF DELEGATES

Sarvshri/Shrimati	Joginder Singh, Amritsar
Ganda Singh, Patiala	Sukhmani Bal, Amritsar
Hari Ram Gupta, Ferozpur	S. D. Gajrani, Patiala
S. N. Chopra, Chandigarh	Balbir Singh, Patiala
S. B. P. Nigam, Kurukshetra	Bharpur Singh, Patiala
Pardaman Singh, Rohtak	Mohan Singh, Patiala
Barkat Rai Chopra, Ludhiana	Amarjit Singh Dhillon, Patiala
Kiran Datar, New Delhi	Naginder Singh, Patiala
Gopal Singh, Simla	R. N. Vohra, Patiala
Rajinder Kaur, Kurukshetra	Pritam Singh Sodhi, Samana
Nazeer Singh Brar, Simla	Kiran Passi, Patiala
H. L. Gupta, Fatehpur	Tripta Sharma
Nirmal Mahajan, Simla	Virinder Singh, Mansa
P. K. Mahajan, Dehradun	B. S. Sidhu, Bhatinda
C. P. Mathur, Chandigarh	Satish Kumar Kapur, Jullundur
S. P. Mathur, New Delhi	Pritpal Singh Bedi, Jullundur
A. R. Khan, Simla	Manjit Kaur, Ludhiana
K. K. Shah, Chandigarh	G. B. Singh, Patiala
Kulbir Singh, New Delhi	Devender Handa, Chandigarh
Kirpal Singh, New Delhi	Ashwani Aggarwal, Kurukshetra
M. Chaudhary, Batala	Narinderjit Kaur, Hoshiarpur
Jagtar Singh, Hoshiarpur	Harbhajan Kaur, Jamna Nagar
Suresh Kumar, Ambala City	Charanjit Singh, Ludhiana
Ravinder Kumar Sharma,	C. L. Datta, Chandigarh
Kurukshetra	Principal, Govt. College, Gurdaspur
N. S. Jaggi, Patiala	Raj Knmar, New Delhi
Hem Raj, Kurukshetra	Joginder Kaur, Phagwara
Inderjit Kapur, Kurukshetra	M. S. Ahluwalia, Simla
Gurdev Raj Kapoor, Nabha	Devender K. Chaudhary, Patiala
Krishan Gopal Datta, Phagwara	Hardeep Singh
G. B. Sharma, Chandigarh	Harnam Singh Shan, Chandigarh
M. L. Ahluwalia, New Delhi	K. K. Rishi
M. L. Kachroo, New Delhi	Kuldeep Singh, Sidhu
Satnam Singh Batra, Patiala	Waryam Singh Bajaj, Malerkotla
Sukhwant Singh, Amritsar	Bakhsha Singh
Kashmir Singh, Amritsar	Madanjit Kaur, Amritsar
Rai Jasbir Singh, Amritsar	S. S. Snehi, Shahpur



S. P. Shukla, Kurukshetra  
 Manmohan Kumar, Rohtak  
 Karanbir Singh Mann, Patiala  
 Surender Kaur Anand, Jullundur  
 Kamlesh Kumari  
 Chattar Singh, Kurukshetra  
 Sarwan Singh, Bhatinda  
 Bishamber Dyal, Rohtak  
 M. L. Thakur, Simla  
 Raja Ram, Chandigarh

R. P. Srivastava, Patiala  
 D. R. Grover, Kurukshetra  
 B. R. Grover, New Delhi  
 G. S. Sandhu, Fatehgarh  
 Jagjiwan Mohan Walia, Patiala  
 Pritam Singh, Jullundur  
 Harcharan Singh, Chandigarh  
 S. K. Bhatia, Bhatinda  
 S. K. Gupta, Simla  
 O. P. Bhardwaj, Chandigarh

#### **Departmental Delegates**

Kirpal Singh  
 Gurbachan Singh Nayyar  
 Gursharan Singh  
 Param Bakhshish Singh

Ajit Singh  
 Balbir Singh  
 Sukhdial Singh  
 R. K. Ghai  
*Kirpal Singh*

#### **History Department**

S. S. Bal  
 A. C. Arora  
 Y. P. Bajaj  
 S. K. Bajaj

S. D. Pradhan  
 D. S. Dhillon  
 Sukhninder Kaur

#### **Correspondence Courses**

S. Abbi  
 Joginder Singh Rekhi

Mohinder Singh  
 Hari Singh

#### **Administrative Staff**

Shubh Kumari  
 Malkiat Singh  
 Avtar Singh  
 Raj Kumar  
 B. L. Kakar

Savita Rani  
 V. S. Bhatia  
 Madhu Narang  
 Trilochan Singh  
 Gurmail Singh





